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**UNDERSTANDING THE PROBLEM OF
CULTURAL NON-PARTICIPATION:**

**Discursive structures, articulatory practice
and cultural domination**

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A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the
requirements for the degree of Doctor of
Philosophy

March 2016

Abstract:

This thesis employs a discursive methodology to analyse the policy problem of cultural non-participation. In so doing it seeks to answer the questions of what the problem is, why a problem exists, and what the existence of the problem does 'in the real' (Bacchi, 2009). The study draws on primary data generated in the form of policy texts, speeches and 42 in-depth qualitative interviews with individuals working in or for publicly funded cultural organisations in Scotland. Employing the methodological approach of problematisation (Foucault, 2003a [1981]), the study offers a close analysis of the discursive logics upon which the construction of the problem relies. In so doing it is asserted that the problem construction functions as an articulatory practice (Laclau & Mouffe, 1985) that not only constitutes and organizes social relations but also supports asymmetric relations of power and allows inequality in society to be represented as both inevitable and sensible (Rancière, 2004).

Beginning with a discussion of how cultural participation has been constructed as an object of enquiry, the thesis moves on to consider how cultural non-participation is constructed as a problem across the discursive planes of politics and professional practice. Having made visible the discursive logics of the problem construction, the discussion then examines the contingent historical conditions under which the existence of certain subjects, objects, and the intelligible relations between them became possible. Arguing that the Arts should be understood as a discursive institution, it is proposed that the subject identity of the non-participant is not only a necessary part of the discursive logic of this institution, but also provided the ideal boundary object (Star and Griesemer, 1989) around which the legitimacy of the relationship between the Arts and the state could, in part, be based.

Drawing on the work of Jacques Rancière (1991; 2004; 2004), it is argued that the manner in which those labelled as non-participants are subjectified obscures their agency and in so doing suppresses their capacity to speak within the field of cultural policy. As such, the field of cultural policy remains characterized by asymmetric relations of power and dominated by those who lay claim to the discursive identity of cultural professionals. The result is state subsidised practices that while doing little to influence individual patterns of behavior, through performing inclusion and equality contribute to the maintenance of a status-quo in which state support will only be provided to individuals who accept the values of those who exercise the most power in the field.

Keywords: *cultural policy; problematisation; Foucault; Rancière; cultural participation; non-participation; barriers, boundary objects; the Arts; discourse analysis; social inclusion*

Acknowledgements

A lot of people have contributed towards the submission of this thesis. Too many to mention here, but all of whom shall be thanked in person. In brief, however, I would like to thank Queen Margaret University, and in particular the staff of the School of Arts, Social Science and Management, many of who have supported me in undertaking this study. My family and friends have all been patient and supportive, both those who were a part of my life when this began and those that I have been lucky enough to have come in to my life while I was completing it.

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Introduction

i The origin of a puzzle

The Scottish Government wishes to increase cultural participation and engagement, and in so doing implicitly suggest that a portion of the populace is currently culturally disengaged¹. This is the portion of the population that is referred to within the field of cultural policy as the non-participant. Yet who, exactly, is a cultural non-participant? This was the puzzle from which this research began. It was a puzzle because the researcher had never met one. They shared John Holden's belief that the entire population takes part in some sort of cultural activity, because "pretty much everyone listens, reads, watches, dances or sings" (2010, p.64). Nowhere in their life had a cultural non-participant presented themselves to the researcher, the very notion seemed nonsensical against the palpable evidence of experience, and yet there were evidently enough of them to warrant the Scottish Government to seek them out and take action to ensure their cultural participation.

The researcher found themselves faced with this puzzle upon hearing that "*increasing cultural engagement*"² was to become one of the Scottish Government's fifty national indicators and thus one of the key measures of progress towards Scotland becoming "*a better place to live and a more prosperous and successful country*" (Scottish Government, 2012, n.p.). Indeed despite there being no definitive statement of government cultural policy in Scotland, what has been made explicit is that their aim is to "*encourage participation in a diverse cultural life*" and that as such it is "*vital that everyone has the opportunity to participate*" (Scottish Government, 2015a). For this reason, the Scottish Government is:

¹ A variety of phrases were employed in relation to the policy aim of increasing cultural engagement, all of which can be assumed to be a synonym for the culturally disengaged. Throughout the research there were regular references to 'non-participants', 'potential participants', the 'hard-to-reach', 'non-attenders', 'non-users' or 'non-visitors' (See Widdop & Cutts 2011 for an example of a policy relevant document in which all of these terms are used). Given the prevalence with which it was used, it is the label of the non-participant that the current research will adopt in discussing this discursive identity.

² Primary data has been italicised throughout.

“fully committed to widening engagement with culture for all communities and individuals” [and that they desire] “for access to, and participation in, cultural activities to be as wide as possible” (Scottish Government, 2010a)

As a national indicator, a yearly statistic was to be published pointing to the percentage of the population who were participating in culture, and thus, by default, highlighting the percentage of those who were not. Those who were not – around 9-11 % of the Scottish population depending on the year - are variously referred to as ‘non-participants’, ‘hard-to-reach’, ‘non-attenders’, ‘non-users’ or ‘non-visitors’ in the policy documents and associated research (See Widdop & Cutts 2011 for an example of a text in which all of these terms are used). It was also apparent that the supposed lack of cultural participation on behalf of these individuals was something that local authorities and organisations receiving public subsidy were strongly encouraged by the Scottish Government to try and address:

*All those involved in the provision of culture are encouraged specifically to target **non-attenders**, and to consult them, when planning, developing, appraising and marketing their cultural ‘product’, whether it be an exhibition in a museum or gallery, a music or theatre event, or a library service” (Scottish Government, 2008, emphasis added)*

Indeed the commitment to encouraging participation and promoting appreciation of arts and culture were included in the list of Creative Scotland’s six statutory functions when it was established in 2009 through an act of parliament (Scottish Parliament, 2009c, 2009a). In particular there was a requirement to increase the “*diversity of people who access and participate in the arts and culture*” (Scottish Parliament, 2009a). Yet cultural organisations have been seeking to address the problem of access and participation for some time (Belfiore and Bennett, 2010; Kawashima, 2006). And so through attempting to make sense of one puzzle, a further, larger puzzle began to demand the attention of the researcher: why does cultural non-participation remain a

problem despite decades of policy interventions intended to address it, and perhaps more importantly, why is it a problem for the state in the first place?

The problem of cultural non-participation and the state's role in addressing it is not a recent phenomenon. Galloway & Jones argue that there has long been a drive to increase participation and engagement in the arts (2010) and the belief that civil society has a role to play in supporting the cultural lives of their citizens is one with a genealogy that has been argued to stretch at least as far back as Greek and Roman civilisation (Belfiore and Bennett, 2010; Sinclair, 1995). Yet despite this long history of encouraging participation, the problem of non-participation appears to persist and therefore continues to be something requiring state intervention not only in Scotland but across the UK and beyond (Stevenson *et al.*, 2015; Stevenson, 2013b; Balling and Kann-Christensen, 2013; Tomka, 2013). In England, the Department for Culture Media and Sport (DCMS) has spoken of the importance of understanding non-participation because "*a large proportion of adults **do not meet the targets** for participation*" (Charlton *et al.*, 2010, p.8, emphasis added). Perhaps even more alarmingly, the European Commission proclaimed that Europe was becoming a "*less cultural continent*" (2013a), a conclusion they had reached on the basis of the latest cross national cultural participation survey in which they found the number of cultural non-participants was rising.

This problem is one that Europe shares, apparently irrespective of the specific findings of any survey or the various policies that are in place. For example, despite Denmark enjoying the highest levels of active participation in Europe, their cultural policy continues to suggest that they have a problem of 'non-users' (Balling and Kann-Christensen, 2013). In Scotland, the same surveys that are used to highlight areas of 'under-participation' also indicate that 90% of adults are 'culturally engaged' (Scottish Government, 2009). A 90% rate of cultural engagement could easily be interpreted as an indication that no problem exists, especially when considering that this engagement is measured only in relation to a select number of the potential activities that could be understood as cultural participation. However the Scottish Government continues to state that

there remains a “*split between those participating in culture and those who do not*” (2008). Likewise, the Warwick Commission on Cultural Value identified widening participation and engagement in the culture and creative industries as a priority for policy making while simultaneously celebrating the UK as a culturally rich and diverse society (2015). Indeed, the problem of cultural non-participation exists in a society where cultural participation appears to be increasingly accessible and ubiquitous in people’s lives. We live in a society in which there is an abundance of objects and activities with which to participate, available in ever-increasing formats and accessible via a diversity of platforms. For example, over 100,000 people went to see two concerts over one weekend (ITV News, 2015) and a Korean singer has been listened to over 2 billion times on YouTube (McIntyre, 2014).

Even more curious is that despite a decade of measurement and related policies in the UK, combined with an explosion in digital opportunities for participation, the headline rate of cultural participation is little changed (Martin *et al.*, 2010). This has led some, such as theatre director Danny Moar, to argue that cultural policy has primarily exhibited a “remorseless and obsessive preoccupation” about subsidised organisations “chasing after new audiences who, for perfectly legitimate reasons, are just not interested [in what those organisations do]” (Culture Media and Sports Committee, 2011, p.19). In addition, it is unclear as to what the primary motivation is that lies behind the drive for greater cultural participation. Where some might argue that it is in order to ensure people are getting the best from their public services, others could equally point to the persistence of a belief in the capacity of culture to do things to society, be it civilising the population at the turn of the last century, or reintegrating the socially excluded at the turn of this.

While others (Oakley and Bell, 2014; Holden, 2010) have asked in relation to cultural participation - what’s the problem? – the answers they offer tend to critique the definition of the problem rather than questioning its ontological status, considering why it exists, and reflecting on what its existence does to social relations. This is indicative of the extent to which an objective problem ‘in

the real' (Bacchi, 2009) is assumed to exist, albeit one about which definitional disputes can be conducted. What has not been considered is the potential that the problem cultural participation surveys are designed to measure, and cultural engagement policies are intended to address, is a discursive construction. If one seeks to analyse it from this perspective, then cultural participation policies can be understood as discursive practice that sustains the problem construction and perpetuates the subjectification of certain individuals through the acceptance of the uncontested categories that the discourse creates and sustains (Bacchi 2009). It is from this perspective that the current study has been undertaken and upon which its original contribution to knowledge is in part based.

ii Research question

As shall be outlined in Chapter 1, methodologically this research falls under the broad umbrella of Interpretive Policy Analysis (IPA) and Schwarz-Shea and Yanow offer the following description of how research of this kind should develop:

[It] begins with a puzzle, a surprise or a tension, and then seeks to explicate it by identifying the conditions that would make that puzzle less perplexing and more of a 'normal' or 'natural' event [...] In this puzzling out process, the researcher tacks continually, constantly, back and forth in an iterative-recursive fashion between what is puzzling and possible explanations for it, whether in other field situations [...] or in research-relevant literature. (2012, p.27)

While this researcher might adapt the description to suggest that what is of interest is more specifically the factors that make that which the researcher finds puzzling apparently normal or natural to others, what the quote is intended to highlight is the manner in which both the starting point and research journey are understood in research of this kind. Although it should not be understood as an example of Grounded Theory (Glaser and Strauss, 1967), IPA does share a similarly non-linear approach to the process of research. Most modes of Interpretative Policy Analysis begin not with a rigid hypothesis, for

which evidence will be gathered to either support or refute its validity, but rather with a broader topic, chosen because of an apparent policy puzzle (Mason 1996) that requires further exploration and for which existing logical positivist analysis appears inadequate. Equally, although it is not the case that grand theory has nothing to offer in addressing the area of inquiry – indeed such theories are an important heuristic aid in the sense-making process that the researcher is conducting - they are not the starting point of the work. What is of utmost importance is that there must be a balance, an “ongoing dialogue between theory and the empirical world” (Wagenaar, 2011, p.10).

As such, interpretative approaches to policy analysis are often informed by a belief that undertaking a rigidly systematic enquiry can risk the researcher applying *a priori* assumptions about what will be of importance to the study. This in turn leads to an inflexible process of data generation and analysis combined with an absence of reflexivity that either overlooks potentially valuable sources of information or is less than transparent about the degree to which unacknowledged sources may have influenced the conclusions presented. Schwartz-Shea & Yanow (2012) argue that although having a structured research design does not preclude the generation of the type of critically oriented enquiry that an interpretative analysis is intended to produce, they encourage researchers designing studies to free themselves of some of the more constraining structural features of scientific research that all too often are adopted in name alone in an attempt to speak the language of supposedly objective evidence. This is because many of the methodologies that can be subsumed under the IPA heading are based on ontological and epistemological assumptions that make the linear practices and normative language associated with what is normally understood as good research design, at best irrelevant and at worst contradictory to the conclusions reached. Therefore flexibility towards the evolution of the research design is central to interpretative research because the “abductive and hermeneutic reasoning that undergird the interpretive research processes are both built on successive phases of learning [...] the investigation builds on itself in a reiterative, recursive fashion”

(Schwartz-Shea & Yanow 2012, p.79). Unlike in positivist informed research, changes to the research design should be expected and indeed welcomed. They are an indication that the researcher is responsive to their surroundings and is responding to their experiences as they attempt to make sense of their area of enquiry, a process in which they become methodological negotiators (Denzin and Lincoln, 2013).

With regards to the present research, as part of this process of negotiation, over time and informed by an on-going reflective dialogue between theory and the empirical evidence, the initial puzzle was refined into more distinct lines of enquiry that allowed the researcher to be able to judge what material was relevant and to provide the fulcrum through which otherwise disparate observations could become linked and understood. Within interpretative research this type of emergent understanding is “allowed – and indeed expected – to develop over the course of the research project, [it is] an iterative process of researcher sense-making which cannot be fully specified *a priori* because of its unfolding, processual character” (Schwartz-Shea & Yanow 2012, p.78). It relies upon the sort of feedback loop (Silverman, 2010) in which the on-going experiences of the researcher continue to shape both their area of interest and the methods employed, through encouraging a “generative confrontation of [the] initial ideas and preconceptions about the project with the body of empirical material [that is being generated]” (Wagenaar, 2011, p.231).

However, eventually both the research question and the approach adopted in answering it become more fixed, and with regards to the current research it became apparent that the object of study was not the non-participant, but rather their discursive representation within the field of cultural policy as a problem that could and should be solved. It became evident that the core question the researcher sought to answer was:

Why is there a problem of cultural non-participation?

Focusing on problems is not unusual for policy analysis, however interpretative policy scholars have focused on the failure of mainstream policy analysis to take account of the “inherently normative and interpretive character of policy

problems” (Fischer, 2003, p.11). Such scholars suggest that governing has become about “the identification [or representation] of situations as problems, the recognition of expertise in relation to these problems and the discovery of ‘technologies’ of governing which are seen as an appropriate response” (Colebatch, 2006, p.313). Wagemans proposes that this means governments “have limited interest in the reality of what is going on in society because problems, opportunities, and solutions are only relevant as far as they can be handled within the existing institutional system. Accordingly, problems and their definitions are adapted to instruments instead of vice versa” (2002, p.64). He argues that this then leads to entrenched social structures that are asymmetrically aligned and difficult to alter.

Citing Bennett’s oft referenced discussion about the torn halves of cultural policy (2004), Bell and Oakley (2015) suggest that cultural policy researchers are in general caught between critical and applied approaches. The subsidised cultural sector, both in the UK and abroad has faced increasing calls to legitimise the public money it receives (Larsen, 2014; Holden, 2006). As such, much cultural policy research is often accused of being loosely disguised special pleading (Craik, 2007) as it has become caught up with what Fischer describes as the politics of advocacy (2003). Arguably this is because a significant amount of research is conducted by those close to the sector and sympathetic to their need for greater evidence to support continued subsidy. As Craik (2007) suggests, it is likely that the majority of cultural policy researchers have an *a priori* belief in the value of the sector they research and their aim is thus to evidence this value through the legitimate channels of what is understood as objective academic research.

As such, this study has chosen to take an interpretative approach so as to allow for a more critical reflection and discussion about the problem of cultural non-participation. With a desire to avoid an accusation of uncritical, naïve and idealistic advocacy, both the research focus and methodology have been selected so as to offer an opportunity not only to ask the sort of difficult

questions that Belfiore (2012) has argued cultural policy research too often fails to address, but also to seek to answer them in a difficult way that does not succumb to a necessity to offer explicit and detailed technical solutions and pseudo-action (Adorno, 1978). For critique need not simultaneously suggest definitive action as “it is rather the task of thought to analyse the reasons behind the situation and to draw the consequences from these reasons” (Adorno, 1978, p.200).

iii Overview of the thesis

In an attempt to offer the reader an opportunity to understand the broad structure of the analysis and arguments with which they are to be presented, this introduction will now conclude with a brief overview of the chapters that follow.

Chapter 1 – Outlining the research approach

For reasons that will be explained in due course, rather than offering a literature review Chapter 1 outlines the research approach that has been taken to conduct this research. In so doing it seeks to both situate the work within a discipline and to provide an explanation of how the chosen methodology has affected both its relation to the existing body of knowledge and the manner in which data has been generated and analysed. It begins with a short discussion about the nature of policy studies and the extent to which a broad variety of approaches have emerged since Harold Laswell first conceived of a policy science that was intended to contribute towards a policy making process primarily understood in terms of authoritative rational choice (Parsons, 1995; see also Colebatch, 1998 for discussion about the nature of policy as an object of study). A summary of the primary critiques of rational policy analysis leads to Interpretative Policy Analysis (IPA) being identified as a broad approach to policy research that takes into account the role that language plays in constructing a social reality. However, it is a specifically discursive perspective that has been adopted for the present study and as such there is an extended discussion about the extent to which the discursive logics evident in the language employed to talk about policy problems constructs and represents certain social actions and agents as

problematic and thus legitimate objects of state intervention, a process that Foucault has described as discursive problematisation (1977, 1972).

As shall be explained, in order for the researcher to analyse cultural participation as a problematisation they began with Carol Bacchi's Foucauldian inspired framework for analysing problem representations (2009) but expanded it in order to better encompass the dispositive (Jager and Maier, 2009; Foucault, 2002 [1966]) of which the problem representation in policy texts is but one part. In practice, this widens the discursive sites at which data can be generated, and as such the researcher was not only interested in written texts but also in speech acts, practices, and objects that share a system of meaning with those texts. Throughout the analysis, the aim has been to reflect on the assumptions and critical logics (Howarth, 2010) that underlie the problem construction and in doing so consider what is left unproblematic or silenced (Bacchi, 2009). The aim of such an approach is to problematise the problematisations³ (Bacchi, 2009; Howarth, 2009) in order to foreground the normative assumptions upon which a stated policy problem has been based. As Foucault has argued, employing problematisation as a research methodology is first and foremost "an endeavour to know how and to what extent it might be possible to think differently, instead of what is already known" (1985, p.9).

Chapter 2 – Social and Political Logics: Constructing cultural participation as an object of enquiry

This chapter offers what would traditionally be understood as the literature review. However, as outlined in Chapter 1, to see the existing research as occupying a neutral space outside of discourse is antithetical to the methodology that has been adopted. As such, what Chapter 2 provides is a discussion about the different ways in which cultural participation - and in particular the problem of cultural non-participation - has been constructed, understood and represented in the existing research as an object about which truths can be claimed. In doing so it highlights the dominant social and political

³ Foucault used the term problematisation to refer both to the construction of a practice as a problem, and to the methodology by which the problem construction could be analysed. For the purpose of clarity, this thesis will use the term to refer to the methodology alone.

logics upon which the problem construction relies. Beginning with a discussion of how culture has been defined as a distinct field of human activity, it then progresses to a discussion about the ways in which participation with culture has been constructed as valuable for both the individual and society. Part three of this chapter focuses on the explanations that are given for the contingent social relations that are highlighted by cultural participation surveys. In particular the notion of barriers is discussed and the extent to which the idea of intra-personal psychological barriers relies heavily on the arguments of Bourdieu (1986 [1979]), in particular his theory of cultural capital and the role this plays in social stratification. The chapter concludes by contrasting this dominant logic with alternative explanations that do not represent the observable differences in what people do as a social problem requiring state intervention. Drawing in particular on literature from economics and marketing, alternative discursive strands are highlighted that represent differing patterns of participation in terms of individual identity, market conditions and personal motivations.

Chapter 3 – The dominant discourses of cultural participation in the field of cultural policy

This chapter moves on to analyse policy texts and qualitative interviews, arguing that in order to understand why the problem construction of cultural non-participation is sustained one must consider how it is reproduced. In analysing policy texts and qualitative interviews, the researcher found that they were faced with two distinct and apparently contradictory discursive strands of cultural participation. In one - the strand of abundant participation - there was an abundance of opportunities to participate with culture and the creative industries, so much so that rates of cultural participation were significant enough to be seen as a primary driver of economic growth. In the other - the strand of inadequate participation - there was a deficit of opportunities for cultural participation and culture was a more rarefied range of activities and objects around which distinctions and hierarchies continued to exist.

However it is only in the strand of inadequate participation that the problem of cultural non-participation becomes possible. The problem is constructed in terms of there being a certain type of experience that some people are having a suboptimal degree of exposure to because of various barriers that are preventing them from doing particular types of things. The state is therefore represented as addressing this market failure through the provision of opportunities to participate with state subsidised organisations and activities. However, there are distinct limits about what can be understood as an appropriate intervention by the state and what would be considered as unnecessary or inappropriate. In particular, participation with for-profit organisations and activities is seen as something distinct, with the associated implication that such participation is of lesser value to society than that which occurs with state subsidised organisations.

Chapter 4 – The genealogy of the problem construction

Chapter 4 sees the thesis move on to propose that the possibility of cultural non-participation was first constructed as part of the discursive constitution of the Arts as an institution. As such, non-participation and the related identity of the non-participant has always been a necessary part of this institution's discourses, discourses that required adaptation when the Arts sought public subsidy from the state and was brought into direct relationship with the discourses of government. The figure of the non-participant became the ideal boundary object around which the discourses of these two institutions could combine. The Arts was already discursively associated with a unique and transformative experience and there were those in society that the discourses of government had deemed in need of transformation. The fact that those represented by the state as being in need of transformation were not currently participating with the Arts could in turn be pointed to as evidence that the transformative claims of the Arts were true and thus justification for their continued support. As such, not only was the possibility of non-participation fundamental to the institutional discourses of the Arts, the subject identity of the non-participant now provided this institution with an object upon which it

could claim to positively act in the interests of society, and thus justify its public subsidy.

However there is a problem that the Arts continues to face in maintaining the legitimacy of these claims. For despite all the activity that has been undertaken under the rationale of increasing cultural participation, it remains the case that the majority of what receives public subsidy attracts the participation and interest of a minority of the population. So even if claims about the transformative powers of participation with the Arts are true, the majority of the public that are paying for them appear not to be exposed to their benefits. As such, the continued non-participation of the majority in that which receives public subsidy must be explained, but explained in such a manner as to continue to justify the existence of state subsidies for the Arts. As Chapter Five will argue, this is achieved through the manner in which those that can employ the greatest power within the field construct the subject of the non-participant as an object in the discourse, and about which taken for granted claims can be made.

Chapter 5 – Fantasmic logic: Designing desirable models of agency

Chapter 5 offers a close analysis of the fantasmic logics in the problem construction that problematise the agency of those who show no interest in the Arts. Beginning with a discussion about how non-participants are represented as socially deprived and hard to reach, the chapter moves on to highlight how non-participants are also presumed to lack knowledge and understanding about what they are failing to participate with. As such it is implied in the logics of the problem construction that once this is addressed with the right sort of intervention the non-participants' patterns of participation should align with the patterns of participation exhibited by those who are understood to be participating 'normally'. This is indicative of the distinction between the discursive identity of the cultural participant who, when they have reached a conclusion that something is not for them are seen as having made a legitimate choice, and the discursive identity of the non-participant who, when they have reached the same conclusion are seen to have made a flawed judgment as the result of structural determinants. While the choices of the cultural participant

are represented as the legitimate expression of personal preference informed by an enlightened education consisting of the right knowledge and experience, the choices of the non-participant are associated with ideas of class distinction, false consciousness and structural exclusion.

Such a perspective forever obscures the agency of the non-participant and denies any potential for them to be acknowledged as a conscientious non-participant of the Arts and therefore inequitably served by state spending. It renders any choice to reject certain organisations and practices as a deviance from the norm, a technical problem that is solvable via appropriate policy interventions primarily delivered by manifestations of the very institution that the supposed non-participant has chosen to reject, an institution whose discourses make the very existence of the non-participant possible. The potential to see non-participation as political, the rejection of dominant discourses about the very nature and value of the unique artistic experience is thus effectively obscured.

Chapter 6 – Asymmetric relations of power

As Chapter 5 will outline, labelling someone as a non-participant discursively associates them with a lack of aspiration, drive and openness. This discursive identity ensures that those labelled as non-participants cannot be heard in the field of cultural policy, although their voice can be invoked. As such, Chapter 6 argues that the field remains dominated by a cultural elite whose participation preferences enjoy significantly more direct state support than others. This final chapter outlines the extent to which the potential for these cultural elite was also the product of the discursive constitution of the Arts. Their claim to specialist knowledge has allowed those that adopt this identity to exert greater influence on the field of cultural policy through their ability to manage the dominant discourses through which it functions. It is proposed that this elite is a network of cultural professionals who function as a community of discourse or a discursive coalition (Howarth, 2010) in the sense that they adhere to the discursive logics of the Arts in order to identify, discuss and value certain

practices and in so doing affirm their own elevated status within the field of which the institution is a part.

Chapter 6 goes on to argue that it is the dominance of the cultural professional over the field of cultural policy that means despite the rhetoric around supporting cultural participation, in actuality this is a performative practice that is about affirming the value of the Arts and the legitimacy of its existing relationship with the state. Acknowledging that there are those who feel such a situation is at worst benign, this research argues this is not the case because choice is an individual act that becomes political when one person's choices are granted greater status by the state than another's, and that in turn this then affirms the status of the individual who made that choice. This is important because the impact of such discursive subjectification and the inequality that it affirms is not limited to the field of cultural policy. Because of the extent to which the discourses of the Arts and government are bound together, the problematisation of cultural participation supports the dominant logics of social mobility and the assumed justice of a meritocracy. Logics that have seen concerns about empowerment and inclusion supersede questions of material entitlement and structural inequality (McGuigan, 2004) and which performative participation policies only serve to affirm.

Conclusion

The thesis concludes by arguing that the problem construction of cultural non-participation is integral to the discursive legitimacy of the relationship between the Arts and the state. It is constructed as being a problem for those labelled as non-participants, and the construction of non-participants as a subject provides a discursive object upon which the Arts can legitimately claim to act in return for public subsidy. As such, the legacy of this discursive logic is a cultural policy that continues to be "about creating the bureaucracies that deal with the problems that the very institution of the policies create" (Miller and Yudice, 2002, p.25). The crisis of legitimacy faced by the Arts with regards to state subsidy is forever neutralised by negating the validity of the value judgements made by those that do not participate with its manifestations. This

neutralisation is achieved through managing the subject identity of the non-participant, and undertaking the performative practice of 'reaching out' that allows the Arts to be represented as being for, and of, everyone. In turn, and in alignment with the dominant discourses of the modern episteme, the greatest change is represented as being required on the part of those most inequitably served by the societal status quo, not by the institution that affirms their inequality as something inevitable. It is the choices of those labelled as a non-participant that are represented as neither being diverse enough nor open to being challenged. The absence of diversity with regards to what gets funded and who makes those decisions is forever obscured by the invitation to take part after the value judgements have been made.

Despite the critical methodology that has been employed, the researcher is mindful of a pragmatic necessity to offer reflections on how this argument might affect cultural policy making. As such, it is suggested that to finally upset this institutionalised inequality would require a shift in how decisions are made. A shift away from a model in which certain people are shut out of decisions about supporting cultural participation on the basis of their ignorance about how best to enrich their own life. This political change cannot be achieved through solely technical means, for a dialogue would need to occur in which no one was labelled as a non-participant so that everyone's values could be heard and acknowledged as equal within the field. The purpose of such dialogue should not be understood as ensuring an expanded number of activities are valued *as* cultural participation, because as it stands being valued as cultural participation means being valued within the discursive logics of the Arts. It is the dominance of this institution that needs to be disrupted if an emancipatory cultural policy is ever to be achieved. For culture is not the sole preserve of the Arts, and the field of cultural policy should not be constrained by the dominant discourses of a single institution no matter how pervasive. Progressive cultural policy making and the research needed to engender it requires thinking outside of the Arts, however its discursive constitution makes it very difficult to do so. This thesis

hopes to initiate that process through providing a possible theoretical framework through which such thinking could be developed.

Chapter 1 – Outlining the research approach

The chapter below aims to not only detail the methodology adopted, but also to outline how this methodology has shaped the entire approach that has been taken in producing this research. Situating cultural policy analysis within the wider discipline of policy studies, the discussion first highlights the extent to which an increasing number of diverse accounts about the nature of policy and policy-making have led to equally diverse approaches to conducting the study of policy. However, as shall be detailed in due course it is an interpretative approach to policy analysis that has been employed for the current study, specifically one informed by a Foucauldian concern with discourse and the discursive construction of problems within which subjects, objects and the potential relationships between them are established.

1.1 Cultural policy studies

Cultural policy studies is an expanding field of study and one that has explored a diversity of policy areas both large and small, from the global to the local. Whilst by no means extensive, an indicative list might include: the creative industries (see, for example: Oakley 2009; Miller 2009; Galloway & Dunlop 2007a; Garnham 2005; Hesmondhalgh & Pratt 2005); creative cities (Bonet *et al.*, 2011; Pratt, 2010; McGuigan, 2009); the public provision of museums and libraries (Bennett, 1998; Bennett, 1995;), free entry to museums (Martin, 2002; Bailey and Falconer, 1998); the role of popular culture (Looseley, 2011); local cultural policymaking (O'Brien and Miles, 2010; Gilmore, 2004); cultural diplomacy (Nisbett, 2012; Mark, 2010); the cultural Olympiad (Low and Hall, 2012; Gilmore, 2012); cultural regeneration (Pratt, 2009; García, 2004; Montgomery, 2003); and indeed, cultural participation (Jancovich, 2015, Stevenson, 2013b; Balling and Kann-Christensen, 2013; Gilmore, 2013). It is important, however, to note that there are differences between these studies in relation to their ontological understanding of what cultural policy is and how to analyse it, with the object of study variously being understood as discourse, text, process, and practice (Bell and Oakley, 2014). It is for this reason that although Schuster acknowledges there has been increasing interest in cultural policy research, he

finds it far harder to clearly delimit what such research can be understood to be about (2002a).

Evolving from the work of various disciplines, in various locations, the subject area has to some extent consolidated to the point that there are now a number of conferences and journals dedicated to the discussion and dissemination of research undertaken in this area, and a significant number of degree level programs orientated to the field (Bell and Oakley, 2015). While the locus of activity was, for some time, an interface between researchers in the UK, United States and Australia, more recent developments have been stimulated by Nordic, South East Asian and South American scholars (Flew, 2012). Reviewing the development of the discipline, Scullion and Garcia (2005, p.11) propose that a specific tripartite research agenda has developed that investigates:

- the history and historiography of cultural policy;
- the principles and strategies of cultural policy, and;
- the relationship between cultural policy and cultural theory/cultural studies

Although highlighting the distinctions that exist between them, they acknowledge that these three broad categories of history, practice and theory are strongly interconnected and that their interconnection is a common feature of much research in this emergent discipline.

Research relevant to the field of cultural policy studies is conducted by a varied range of individuals with a diverse range of research interests and motivations (for a discussion, see: Scullion and García, 2005; Schuster, 2002). As such, the discipline of cultural policy studies is understood to be both multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary in practice and absorbs research from more established disciplines into its canon⁴ (such as political science and cultural studies). The fluidity of the terrain means that reflecting on what, in the context of their

⁴ These multidisciplinary approaches can result in tension that both Bennett (2004) and Gray (2010) have reflected on in relation to the development of the subject area.

research, they understand cultural policy to be becomes the first job of any researcher whose work is orientated towards it. This process brings into being the object of their study, which although not an objective reality might be considered as such within the parameters of their work.

Given the diverse backgrounds of those contributing knowledge to this field, it is not then surprising to find a multiplicity of views on what cultural policy is, although most commonly it is understood as a form of public policy practice that is orientated towards a distinct groups of social agents and actions that might commonly include the arts and creative industries (Bell and Oakley, 2015). Such a definition has also been expanded to include all the actions taken by a state that affect the cultural life of its citizens (Gray, 2010). Ahearne (2009) and DiMaggio (1983) categorize these positions as perceiving two differing but related objects of study and label them as either implicit and explicit (Ahearne, 2009) or indirect and direct (DiMaggio, 1983) cultural policies. However these debates tend to focus on what can be understood *as* cultural policy, and as such questions remain around what cultural policies *are*, what they exist for, how and why they are created, practiced and assessed and what there is to learn from analysing them (Gray, 2010).

The discipline of cultural policy studies is also understood as being concerned with values to a more explicit degree than any other policy area. DiMaggio argues that cultural policy is most likely to be found where there is a dissensus over the meaning, value, nature or distribution of the good in question and as such “cultural policies [...] are those that regulate what has been called the marketplace of ideas” (1983, p.242). As such, exercising an influence over what types of human practice gain a public presence and the manner in which this public presence both emerges and is framed, inherently exerts a structural pressure on the production and circulation of meanings within society, with concomitant influences on social relations. Therefore, there are those who argue that cultural policy studies is the missing agenda of cultural studies (McRobbie, cited in Miller and Yudice, 2002). These perspectives suggests it is a utilitarian

application of a critical engagement with cultural artifacts that responds to the claims of irrelevance outside the academy that had beset the discipline in the nineteen eighties (also see Bell & Oakley 2015 for a discussion of the influence of cultural studies on cultural policy studies).

However, the discipline of cultural policy studies appears to have inherited what Barker (2005) describes as the primary sin of cultural studies, namely a tendency for researchers to offer only a brief and somewhat vague discussion of the methodology upon which their argument is based⁵. This is especially problematic given that, as has already been noted, research in this field draws from many disciplines, not only cultural studies but also philosophy, art history, sociology, politics, science and technology studies, and economics. All of these are disciplines that bring their own methodological complexities, yet are often combined in the pursuit of multidisciplinary work with too little detail about how their different methodological perspectives have been integrated (Gray, 2010). This means that at a disciplinary level cultural policy studies can often lack clear parameters and boundaries and some of the research conducted can be open to accusations of exhibiting a lack of methodological rigor that evades robust critique (Scullion and García, 2005; Schuster, 2002). With regards to the present study, the detail offered below hopes to assuage the potential for such accusations to some degree, while also offering a framework in which others may choose to work in future.

1.2 Policy Analysis

The analysis of, and engagement with, policy and policy-related issues is something that is increasingly prevalent across disciplines. No longer confined to political science, it is a prominent feature in the fields of cultural studies, management studies, environmental studies, international relations, health and education. This is perhaps because there are few, if any areas of life that remain outside of the logics, rationales and regimes of policy. Those researchers

⁵ With regards to cultural studies, the methodological texts of Alasuutari (1995), McGuigan (1997) and Gray (2003) are notable exceptions.

working within the applied strand of policy analysis generally understand the object of their study as a linear and rationale process of structured interaction in which the role of the analyst is to provide objective expertise to the rational authoritative decision maker (Parsons, 1995). From this perspective the policy process is understood “as an exercise in informed problem-solving⁶: a problem is identified, data is collected, the problem is analyzed and advice is given to the policy maker who makes a [rational] decision which is then implemented” (Colebatch, 2006, p.311). In this model, research is conducted *for* policy and its purpose is twofold. Firstly it is to provide an understanding of the behavior of policy relevant agents and the nature of the world they inhabit. Secondly it is to analyze the policy process itself to ensure it is working effectively. In both cases the collection of what are understood as facts is paramount. The aim is to find technical solutions to what are represented as technical problems so as to inform decisions about the best way in which government might intervene so as to ensure the delivery of an outcome deemed to be in the best interests of society.

However this approach to policy analysis has come under sustained critique almost since its inception. Not least because the scientific rationality that it relies upon depicts “a model of society which [leaves] no room either for politics and the practice of the political art, or for a distinctively political theory” (Turnbull, 2007, p.145). Fischer (2003) argues that this approach adopts a neo-positivist framework that supports a technocratic form of governance primarily concerned with control. From this perspective, policy analysis of the type

⁶ The idea that government could solve problems through the implementation of policy emerged in the early twentieth century (Parsons, 1995, p.17). However it was in the United States, and in particular through the work of four scholars, Harold Lasswell, Hebert Simon, Charles Lindbloom and David Easton, that the relationship between science and policy was formally codified. Of particular influence was the publication of *The Policy of Orientation*. Edited in 1951 by Laswell and Lerner this text set out the fundamental assertion that it is the problem orientation that should animate the policy analyst and that made the work distinct from other forms of scholarship (1951). While Laswell’s policy sciences relied on scientific rationality they were not wholly positivist nor slavishly bound to logical empiricism (Turnbull, 2007). Laswell acknowledged the problem of values but bracketed them off from the supposedly objective science of problem solving as something that was done in advance in order to identify the problem and preferred outcome. However this disaggregation of the act of problem setting from the process of problem solving would become the site of much critique of his model.

outlined above exists to legitimate a supposed objective process of decision-making as a particular model of rationality. Although evidence-based policy making was supposed to have replaced the influence of ideology, it may only have obscured it through excluding any consideration of the presence of values, power and politics in policy. For research has shown that the manner in which supposedly objective analysis and evidence is used is unlikely to be either objective or oriented toward solving the problem (for some examples see: Belfiore, 2009; Belfiore and Bennett, 2007a; Belfiore, 2002; Weiss, 1991).

While earlier critiques (Rein and White 1977; Lindbloom 1959) of a purely rational conception of policy had focused on structural factors of process, the argumentative turn (Gottweis, 2006; Fischer and Forester, 1993) focused the analysis on the extent to which policy making relied upon a univocal understanding of vocabulary in which words “have or can be made to have only one meaning, and that meaning can be established without respect to time and place” (Yanow, 1996, p.132). This built on the ideas of Victor Turner (1974) who argued for research to adopt a position of multi-vocality so as to explore both the instability of meaning and its consequences for policy. The belief is that “language does not simply mirror the world, [but rather] profoundly shapes our view of the world” (Buchstein & Jorke, 2012, p.271). As Turnbull notes, Laswell’s (1951) classic approach “excludes questions over the normative formulation of problems and the political rhetoric necessary to justify policy in the event of differences of opinion” (2007, p.13). Furthermore, in Laswell’s understanding of how problems were identified, the public were at worst invisible and at best understood as clients or spectators who required their problems to be shown to them by networks of unrepresentative expertise (Miller and Yudice, 2002). Frank Fischer (Fischer, 2003; Fischer and Forester, 1993) has traced the increasing importance that expertise is understood to have gained in influencing and legitimating government policy and has been influential in encouraging research that considers the role and deployment of power in policy formation, execution and evaluation. In particular he highlights the place of argumentation in policy, the result of which is what Turnbull (2007)

has described as a politicising of the problem orientation through foregrounding the interests and interpretations of those that can exert the greatest power over its identification and construction.

Various researchers have undertaken such work (see, for example Yanow and Schwartz-Shea, 2006; Gottweis, 2006, 2007; Hajer and Wagenaar, 2003; Fischer, 2003; Yanow, 1996) and although informed by a diversity of theoretical perspectives, from French post-structuralism to American pragmatism, they all share the belief that “policies, in general, are not only instrumental-rational acts, but are also expressive of human meaning” (Yanow, 2014, p.37). They can be understood as embodying and expressing the stories each polity tells itself and other publics, about its identity and values. This focus on meanings means that unlike policy research in the positivist tradition, for those adopting an interpretative approach to policy analysis no objective reality is understood to exist that the researcher is able to document, replicate or measure. Meanings are made and remade at both an individual and collective level, driven by encounters with - and exposure to - other agents, institutions and discourses. As Yanow states: “interpretive policy analysis asks not only *what* a policy means [...] but also *how* a policy means” (2014, p.143). The focus is therefore on identifying the ways in which truths about specific types of social activity and actors are made, sustained and transmitted (Yanow, 1996; Torgerson, 1986). In this sense, interpretative analysis of policy is as interested in mapping the architecture (Pal, 1995) of the policy arguments (see Epstein 2008; Swaffield 1998; Linder 1995 for examples) as seeking to directly contribute to the production of policy.

While Interpretive Policy Analysis (IPA) can be used as a general title for this kind of work, in practice this title subsumes a broad spectrum of research activity that includes, for example: Critical Policy Analysis; Deliberative Policy Analysis; Argumentative Analysis; Critical Discourse Analysis; and Frame

Analysis⁷. Although all are shaped by a commitment to the social constructionist movement that developed in France and the UK (Fischer, 2003), there are differences in their understanding of how this socially constructed reality might be understood. As such, IPA cannot be called a single research methodology or method, but rather a loose affiliation of methodologies that are as much defined by what they are not (rational positivist policy science) as what they share in common:

Interpretivism is not only about phenomenological hermeneutics. For instance, because it's also the "application" of such methodological (i.e., ontological and epistemological) presuppositions to political issues, we can't ignore the kinds of issues that critical theorists have addressed. For me Foucauldian analysis or any theorist dealing with issues of power and structure and agency has a place here. Interpretive Policy Analysis is not of a single piece. It includes a very strong, normative theoretical dimension around issues of democracy, citizenship, participation and so on. But then there's also a methodological orientation that's agnostic with respect to that normative dimension, whose exponents try to do research in order to figure out what's going on in a given setting or case without framing the analysis in terms of democracy or citizenship or some other liberal concern (Yanow, in Valenzuela 2012, p.120)

While the researcher would not dispute this assertion, methodological differences do remain between these various approaches and it is important that any researcher undertaking any form of IPA is clear about the particular methodology that has been adopted and how this has informed their understanding of the knowledge that they are producing. As such, it is to the specifics of the methodology that has shaped the present research that the discussion now turns.

⁷ See Yanow and Schwartz-Shea (2013) for a list of the various analytical methods that can be understood to take an interpretative approach to policy analysis.

1.3 Policy as Discourse

As will be outlined in more detail below, it is a discursive approach that has been employed in the present study, more specifically one based upon the Foucauldian notions of genealogy, governmentality, problematisation, and states of domination (Foucault, 1972, 1977, 1980, 1991, 2002 [1966]). Discourse is a term that is widely employed across a broad range of disciplines including critical theory, sociology, linguistics, philosophy, social psychology and many more (Mills, 1997). Howarth (2000) summarizes that its proliferation in the social sciences is in response to the growing dissatisfaction with the dominance of logical positivist approaches to understanding the social world. However, he asserts that its increasing employment has resulted in a proliferation of meanings, interpretations and connotations in which the specific concept of discourse employed varies depending on the research discipline and for what purposes it is engaged. This variety has led to a significant discourse about discourse (Howarth, 2000) in which each understanding has developed an increasingly technical and theoretical sophistication relevant to the discipline specific understanding of the world and the process of gaining knowledge about it. While Bove (1990) and Bacchi (2000) both argue that by its very nature it is inconsistent to search for a correct definition of discourse, it remains important that any research employing it as an analytical term offers some explanation as to how discourse and its relationship to policy has been understood.

Cameron and Panovic (2014) offer three definitional themes that are helpful in drawing out the distinctions with regards to how the term can be employed in research.

- Discourse is language above the sentence;
- Discourse is language 'in use';
- Discourse is a form of social practice in which language plays a central role

The first dimension is most closely related to how it is understood in linguistics where the aim is to describe the form of language and explain how it works as a system. The second is broader and considers the use of language far more. Here, concerns expand to include not only the linguistic form but also other questions including who is using the language, to whom they are communicating, what the content of the language is, what sort of rules it adheres to, and for what purpose has it been employed. This focus on the social is expanded further in the third definition where discourse is not only about representations and systems of meaning, but is also understood as a structuring social practice through which realities are constructed and structured, or made and remade through the use of discourses (now plural). From this final perspective “discourse is a richer ontological category, which captures something about the complex character of all social relations and practices, as well as the ways subjects identify and are captured by certain meaningful practices” (Howarth, 2010, p.311). Agents are not understood as simply subscribing to a shared way of understanding the world, because as Laclau and Mouffe argue “a discursive structure is not a merely ‘cognitive’ or ‘contemplative’ entity; it is an articulatory practice which constitutes and organizes social relations” (1985, p.96).

This perspective encompasses a varied range of positions and approaches. Howarth (2000) suggests that while positivists and empiricists most often perceive discourses as frames - instrumental devices that foster common perceptions and understandings of the world - realists conceive of them as specific objects for study with their own inherent properties and causal powers. Against these conceptions in which an objective world offers a reality against which the character and veracity of a discourse can be understood, stand structuralist, marxist and post-structuralist approaches. Critical Discourse Analysis (often associated with Norman Fairclough and his followers) understands discourse as the semiotic dimension of social practice. It places a greater emphasis on hermeneutical understanding and insists on a “mutually constituting relationship between discourse and the social systems in which they function” (Howarth, 2000, p.67). This type of research often seeks to

explore the manner in which meaning and language become an instrument of the powerful employed to intentionally oppress those they seek to control.

However there are those that argue discourses are not the creation of any one individual, but rather that “they have taken their shape with the passage of time, they reflect the whole history of the societal form, and they have effects that no one has consciously intended” (Talja, 1999, p.469). Therefore, “the expressive⁸ dimensions of policy are rarely explicitly and intentionally crafted” (Yanow, 2014, p.139) and to presume as such leads to one of the common mistakes that Gray (2010) argues discursive analysis of policy often makes. In divorcing the discourses from the specific agents and practices to which they constitutively relate, the cart is put before the horse and consequences are mistaken for causes. “[T]he creation of compliant, managed individuals becomes the reason for cultural policies rather than the outcome of them, which is, apart from being teleological, as Bennett (2004, p.238) notes, a ‘somewhat paranoid formulation’” (Gray, 2010, p.222).

1.3.1 Foucault

In seeking to avoid this, the present research understands discourse in a different manner, one that is perhaps most akin to that which Howarth (2000) has labelled as discursive theory and that he associates with the work of authors such as Derrida, Foucault and Laclau & Mouffe. Although this perspective does not conceive of discourse as the direct product of a few key agents, by virtue of their location within the discourse some agents are understood to have greater influence over its reproduction. Therefore, discourses are not understood as “transhistorical structures operating [entirely] outside of human intervention” (Bacchi, 2000, p.52). For while there may be less focus on the conscious manipulation of meaning by those who can exercise the most power, there remains a concern with the manner in which discourses sustain taken for granted asymmetric power relationships. For “every discursive structure is uneven and hierarchical” (Howarth, 2010, p.313) and thus legitimises and

⁸ By “expressive” Yanow is pointing to the meanings that policy creates and affirms.

secures structures of social dominance (Jager and Maier, 2009) that would otherwise be under threat.

Specifically it is Michel Foucault's notion of discourse that is of most pertinence to the current research⁹, in particular his later concern with genealogy (Foucault, 1980), governmentality (Foucault, 1977) and problematisations (Foucault, 1977). Each of these concepts can be seen as developments or re-articulations of his earlier quasi-structuralist perspectives that had focused on the archaeology of knowledge (Foucault, 1972) but in which the question of power had remained implicit (Howarth, 2010; O'Farrel, 2005). Foucault did not understand discourse as subsequent to the structuring of society – a perspective that grants the action or object ontological primacy - but rather as an integral part of the whole practice of structuring, organizing and managing. From this perspective discourse contributes to the construction of the social world, given that, as Foucault states, discourse (and the discourses that constitute them) are “practices which systematically form the objects of which they speak” (1972, p.49). Collectively they form what Foucault conceived of as an order of things (2002 [1966]) and which “organises everything, makes some things possible and others impossible, permits us to say some things but makes others unthinkable” (Danaher et al., 2000, p.xiv).

To summarise briefly, this perspective is predicated upon an understanding that all objects and actions are discursive in the sense that their meanings depend on a socially constructed set of rules and conventions specific to the context, or more specifically, the discursive field (Foucault, 2002 [1966]) in which the object or action is contemplated (Laclau and Mouffe, 1985). It is these systems of meaning that manifest themselves in normative assumptions, discursive

⁹ While the research presented here has been informed by both Foucault's and Bacchi's thinking, it should not be seen as a direct application of an unproblematic system of conducting discourse analysis. Instead, their work has offered a methodological framework that has proven valuable for the researcher in addressing their research question. While it may regularly evoke the language of Foucault, it is the researcher's interpretation of this language that has been employed and inevitably these interpretations are open to challenge and critique.

keywords, subjectified identities, discourse strands, and discursive practice. According to this perspective, “people don’t ‘think or speak ideas’ or make meanings. On the contrary, structures ‘think and speak through people’” (Danaher et al., 2000, p.8) As Robert Young (cited in McGuigan, 2004, p.35) remarked, the effect of such discourses is to make it virtually impossible to think outside of them, because these various discourses, in tandem with the fields of knowledge of which they are a constituent part, provide the structures of knowledge via which individuals identify, engage and respond to the objects and actions they encounter within the physical world in a socially meaningful way.

1.3.2 The dispositive

Such systems of meaning mean that “discourses do not exist independently; they are elements of dispositives [...] a constantly evolving synthesis of knowledge that is built into language, action and materialisations” (Jager and Maier, 2009, p.109) of which there are three transit points:

- Discourse (language and thought)
- Discursive practice (actions)
- Materialisations (which are created through discursive practice)

Foucault described the dispositive as an apparatus, “a resolutely heterogeneous grouping composing discourses, institutions, architectural arrangements, policy decisions, laws, administrative measures, scientific statements, philosophic, moral and philanthropic propositions; in sum, the said and the not-said, these are the elements of the apparatus. The apparatus itself is the network that can be established between these elements” (Foucault, 1981. in Rabinow and Rose, 2003, p.xvi). Foucault appeared to understand the dispositive as a domain of things about which truths could be claimed to be known (Foucault, 2002 [1966]). While understanding the system of meaning that binds these components together in a dispositive is central to this type of research, it is not in the sense of uncovering the true meaning that had been obscured by those assumed to hold power, as a more Marxist position might take. Nor is it in the

sense of recovering the supposedly authentic meanings that agents give to their actions. For while Foucault appears to acknowledge that the establishment of a dispositive may have been a specific strategic response to a specific historical problem, it “can gradually have a more general rationality extracted from it, and hence be turned into a technology of power applicable to other situations” (Rabinow and Rose, 2003, p.56).

However the task of analysing the dispositive is very complex since by its very nature it requires analysis of the meaning that exists *between* that which the researcher can encounter - it must be analysed through foregrounding the system of knowledge that exists amongst the elements of the apparatus (Foucault, 1977). As such, the scope of work undertaken by those conducting discourse analysis has expanded far beyond a focus on only the written text to include the analysis of a wide variety of linguistic and non-linguistic material including: talk; speeches; historical events; ideas; images; research; organisations; and institutions. All of which can be employed as researchers seek to gain a better understanding of the particular dispositive of which they are a part¹⁰. The aim of research such as this is therefore to analyse and reconstruct (through the language of discussion) the knowledges that both make these practices and materializations knowable and delimit the intelligible with regards to the possible relationships between them.

1.3.3 Relations of power

Foucault advises those wishing to employ his approach to “substitute the logic of strategies for the logic of the unconscious” (Foucault, n.d. in Rabinow and

¹⁰ Although the approaches of Bacchi and Scheurich both make attempts to link the discourses they identify in written texts to specific social objects (such as schools, community centers, job roles etc.) or actions (policy interventions and their associated practices) there remains an unspoken distinction between them. This is evident in Bacchi’s six questions, only one of which – question six - considers the discursive practices of the problematisation, and given the focus on written texts it is unclear how she foresees that this might be approached. As such, the present research sought to develop Bacchi’s approach so as to address this limitation through moving beyond a sole focus on written texts when generating data to include a broader range of text analogues (Ricouer 1971; Taylor 1971; Yanow & Schwartz-Shea 2006; Schwartz-Shea & Yanow 2012; Yanow 2000) so as to offer a greater understanding of how the discourses in question are socially produced, reproduced, disseminated, defended and negotiated.

Rose, 2003, p.xv). For although the aim is to denaturalize the discourse, analysis is not conducted so as to reduce it to an indicator of something else but rather that it might be understood in its own right, to “maintain it in its consistency, to make it emerge in its own complexity” (Foucault, 1972, p.52). The intention is to consider the emergence and perpetuation of historically specific rules and conventions that structure the production of meaning in a particular social context (Howarth, 2000) and the manner in which those rules and conventions are negotiated as part of the will to knowledge (Foucault, 1978) that supports, advantages, or valorises a particular social group in some way. For as McGuigan notes, although this is similar to the Wittgensteinian dictum that language sets the limits to our world, this position goes further in that it requires consideration of the “operations of power in the regulation of discourse, procedures of exclusion, reason and truth, internal policing and conditions of application” (2004, p.35).

This is because there is a direct relationship between truth and relations of power – that Foucault highlights in his use of the term Power/Knowledge (1980 [1976]) - that mean some truths are made truer than others by virtue of existing power relationships already constituted in discourse. Those same truths in turn reinforce the power relationships that guarantee their dominance and normative adoption. Discourses create what Foucault has called states of domination in which “relations of power are fixed in such a way that they are perpetually asymmetrical and the margin of liberty is extremely limited” (Foucault, 1991 [1984], p.12). This does not suggest that people are not free, indeed he argues that “if there are relations of power throughout every social field it is because there is freedom everywhere” (Foucault, 1991 [1984], p.12) and that as such, all systems of domination are always vulnerable to change and transformation given that they will constantly encounter resistance that must be overcome (Howarth, 2010). Indeed according to Foucault the exercise of power presupposes a weakening of the existing structures of dominance, for if oppression could be absolute then there would be no need for relations of power:

...to exercise a relation of power, there must be on both sides at least a certain form of liberty. Even though the relation of power may be completely unbalanced or when one can truly say that they have 'all power' over the other, a power can only be exercised over another to the extent that the latter still has the possibility of committing suicide, of jumping out of the window or of killing the other. That means that in the relations of power, there is necessarily the possibility of resistance, for if there were no possibility of resistance – of violent resistance, of escape, of ruse, of strategies that reverse the situation – there would be no relations of power (Foucault, 1991 [1984], p.12)

Understanding policy as discourse therefore means that the researcher perceives it as part of the dispositive and as such an example of where such relations of power are managed and can be understood. From this perspective, governments are not understood as “responding to problems that exist out there [...] rather problems are created or given shape in the very policy responses that are offered” (Bacchi, 2000, p.48), the ‘discovery’ of a problem is always preceded by its discursive constitution (Watts, 1993). However, labeling some aspect of social practice as a problem requires that alternative understandings of the world be repressed.

1.3.4 Subjugated knowledges

And so while there may be many competing constructions of any aspect of society, those that are constructed as a problem within the discourses of government policy become dominant through their inevitable dissemination through the complex networks by which the state permeates every aspect of their citizens' lives. In turn, this limits what it is possible to think, say or do about this aspect of social practice, and sees conflicting representations become silenced, discounted or marginalised, what Foucault has described as subjugated knowledges (1980) and about which discursive identities can be constructed as both subjects and objects in the discourse. In turn it is these

identities that legitimise the actions that the state takes in their name, because “the institutional authority to categorise people is frequently inseparable from the authority to do things to them” (Cameron, 2013, p.16).

The construction of such subject identities is based on the discursive logics that policies contain. Not in the sense of rigid constraints with regards to how one should or must act but rather about how actions will be socially understood in any given context. They provide the criteria for identifying and evaluating social behavior and using such evaluations to explain inequality. Ultimately, norms of desirable behaviour are established against which people as political subjects are judged and on the basis of which asymmetrical power relationships are accepted. Any divergent action or activity can then only be understood in relation to the normative ideal, either co-opted as part of the solution or pointed to as evidence of the problem requiring corrective action by the state. Although one can choose to resist, contravene or adapt the discursive logics implicit in policy, this resistance and adaptation can only be understood in relation to the dominant logics, their associated discourses and as part of the wider dispositive that gives meaning to the discourses and their discursive opposition. As such, any grievances, demands and alternative constructions of reality advanced by the dominated are discursively channeled and negotiated in ways that result in policy solutions which “do not disturb or modify a dominant practice or regime in a fundamental way” (Howarth, 2010, p.321). Therefore the purpose of analysing policy problems as discourse is to better understand how this occurs in order to “re-activate those opinions that were foreclosed [...] in order to show how present practices rely upon exclusions that reveal the non-necessary character of existing social formations, and to explore the consequences and potential effects of such repressions (Howarth, 2010, p.328).

1.3.5 Problematisation

While scholars such as Fischer (Fischer 2003; Fischer & Forester 1993) and Yanow (2000, 1996) have challenged the ways in which a policy problem is constructed, interpreted or framed, an observable problem is often still

understood to exist and their intent tends to be an attempted reframing of this problem or a facilitated dialogue about the multiple ways in which it can be understood. In contrast, Carol Bacchi's work (2000; 2004; 2009; 2010; 2012) employs the Foucauldian concepts of archaeology, genealogy and problematisation to question the assumption that a problem exists in the real at all, through an analytical process that she describes as problematising the problematisations (2009). While Bacchi has perhaps done the most to systematise this type of approach¹¹, it is not without precedent in the field of policy studies (Howarth and Griggs, 2012; Howarth, 2010). In particular, James Scheurich (1994) advanced an approach to policy analysis that was informed by a similar philosophical pedigree¹².

Bacchi's approach is perhaps best understood as an attempt to systematise the methodology that Foucault called problematisation (1977, 1985). It is an approach that Howarth argues can be read as a combined articulation of Foucault's archaeological and genealogical approaches, where "archaeology describes the rules of formation that structures discourses [and] genealogy examines the historical emergence of a discursive formation with a view to exploring possibilities that are excluded by the exercise of power and systems of domination" (2000, p.46). In the field of policy studies, "the practice of problematisation focuses on the question of problem-definition in a particular field or domain, the various problematisations of this problematisation, and the efforts of an analyst to problematise these problematisations" (Howarth, 2010,

¹¹ The six questions around which Bacchi's method revolves are:

- 1) What is the 'problem' represented to be?
- 2) What are the assumptions and presuppositions that underlie this representation of the 'problem'?
- 3) How has this representation of the 'problem' come about?
- 4) What is left unproblematic in this representation of the 'problem'? Where are the silences? Can the 'problem' be thought about differently?
- 5) What effects are produced by this representation of the 'problem'?
- 6) How is this representation of the problem produced, disseminated and defended? How can it be questioned, disrupted and replaced? (2009)

¹² Developed for policy studies in education, but applied more broadly (see for example Vandersypen 2012) his approach offered a framework for analysis that was intended to expand the capacity of policy analysis to act as a critical problematic. Through approaching policy as the site at which social regularities and normative values can be identified he refused the acceptance of social problems as natural occurrences.

p.325. See also Bacchi 2012 & 2009). The aim is to employ the “logics of critical explanation” to “render a problematised phenomenon – a particular policy or practice for example – more intelligible” (Howarth, 2010, p.326). This is important to undertake given that the social problems governments seek to address should not simply be accepted as natural occurrences that have emerged from an objective reality, but rather as constructed representations of a perceived reality and therefore sites at which social regularities, normative values, and expressions of power can be identified (Bacchi, 2012; Cortell Vandersypen 2012; Bacchi, 2009; Scheurich, 1994).

In this regard, research employing Foucauldian problematisation as a methodology seeks to undertake an immanent, rather than transcendent critique of the policy problem under analysis because it is intended “to make visible the perspectives and starting points on the basis of which knowledge and meanings are produced in a particular historical moment” (Talja, 1999, p.461). It is an enquiry that Watts (1993) summarises as exploring the discursive constitution of a practice as a problem and although this is done in order to “make it possible to evaluate the practical consequences of different ways of approaching a particular phenomenon” (Talja, 1999, p.461), the primary task of the researcher is not to adjudicate between these differences. Rather it is “rediscover at the root of these diverse solutions the general form of the problematisation that has made them possible – even in their very opposition [...] what has made possible the transformations of the difficulties and obstacles into a general problem for which one proposes diverse practical solutions” (Foucault, 2003 [1984], p.24).

1.3.6 Research questions

As was outlined in the introduction the core question that this research seeks to answer is: **Why is there a problem of cultural non-participation?** To answer this using problematisation the following sub-questions were addressed and will be answered in the chapters that follow:

1. How has the problem been constructed as an object of knowledge?
2. What discourses of cultural participation are dominant in the field of cultural policy?
3. What discursive logics are employed to construct non-participation as a cultural policy problem?
4. What is the genealogy of this problem construction?
5. What subjects are constructed within the problem?
6. How are these subjects constructed?
7. How do the constructions of these subjects contribute to the resilience of the problem construction?
8. What effects does constructing non-participation as a problem have on social relations in the real?

1.4 Data Generation

This chapter now moves on to outline how data was generated and analysed in order for the researcher to offer answers to the questions outlined above. To analyse a problem construction a researcher must have data that they believe will make the logics of the problem construction more transparent and amenable to analysis (Jager and Maier, 2009). When conducting any form of interpretative research the researcher does not *collect* data as they might within the positivist paradigm, but instead they are understood as accessing the sites at which data can be *generated* in one of three ways: reading, talking and observing (Yanow and Schwartz-Shea, 2013; Jager and Maier, 2009). This data must be generated in the field, whereby the field is understood not as a particular organisation, group of agents, or geographical location but as a field of knowledge and practice that is to be primarily explored with regards to its discursive structure and the power relationships that it both produces and is a product of. As Foucault states: “power and knowledge directly imply one another [such] that there is no power relation without the correlative constitution of a field of knowledge, nor any knowledge that does not presuppose and constitute at the same time power relations” (1977, p.27). While the researcher may visit various individuals and physical locations in order to generate data, it is as a heuristic act in exploring a discursive space.

While Scheurich and Bacchi's approaches to problematisation do not move beyond the content of published policy texts, this fails to take full account of the multi-modal nature of the dispositive and the extent to which knowledge is not only expressed in language but is also embodied in both actions and materialisations (Jager and Maier, 2009). As such, the present research sought to generate a broader range of data for analysis with the intention of considering a multiplicity of sites of meaning within the dispositive¹³, and to understand the construction and reproduction of the problem across different discursive planes (Wodak and Meyer, 2009). In so doing, the research makes a valuable contribution to knowledge through providing material evidence of how the discursive logics identified are socially reproduced in practice across multiple planes. Although written texts and qualitative interviews were employed as the two primary sources of empirical data generation, as will be discussed in more detail below, adopting problematisation as a methodology means that existing research is also considered part of the dispositive and therefore discussed as such rather than as an objective body of knowledge towards which this research contributes. The sections that follow will now outline in more detail how the various data were generated.

1.4.1 Existing research as data

In research that seeks to understand a problematisation, the existing research is not seen as being outside of the dispositive under analysis but an integral part of it. Conducting research is a discursive act that combines texts, language and practice to produce claims to knowledge and in so doing perform objectivity. From a Foucauldian perspective, research is not a value neutral repository of facts to which a thesis such as this is designed to add, but rather the name given to the work done by certain individuals who seek to "shape the production and interpretation of knowledge" (Denzin and Lincoln, 2013, p.350). As such, traditional literature reviews that set out to undertake a process of gap-spotting

¹³ While this has resulted in the generation of multiple types of data it should not be confused with the mixed methods of positivist approaches that are adopted in a bid to achieve triangulation. Talja (1999) describes it as contextual triangulation and it can be understood as a multimodal approach to research (Muller 2008 cited in Yanow, 2014) that has been described as the process of mapping for exposure and intertextuality (Schwartz-Shea & Yanow 2012).

(Alvesson and Sandberg, 2011) so as to justify new research as a suitable gap-filler tend towards affirming the dominant discourses in the field of study and sustain the normative practices within the institution of academia. Such an approach tends to under-problematise existing literature and in so doing acts to reinforce rather than challenge existing theories and the logics and assumptions on which they are based (2011).

Given the philosophy of the methodology outlined above, adopting the recommended model of literature review → methodology → analysis → discussion can be both inimical and disingenuous to the logics of the study. As Alvesson and Sandberg (2011) note, established ways of researchers relating their question to existing literature rarely attempt to foreground the assumptions and discourses that underlie them and as such:

It is common to refer either positively or mildly critically to earlier studies in order to “extend this literature” (Westphal & Khanna, 2003, p.362), to “address this gap in the literature” (Luscher & Lewis, 2008, p. 221), to point at themes that others “have not paid particular attention to (Thornborrow & Brown, 2009, p.356) or to call for more “empirical research” (Ewenstein & Whyte, 2009, p.7). Such “gap-spotting” means that the assumptions underlying existing literature for the most part remain unchallenged in the formulation of research questions. In other words, gap-spotting tends to under-problematise existing literature and, thus, reinforces rather than challenges already influential theories. (2011, p.247)

As such, rather than a traditional literature review that sits outside of the empirical analysis, this research has located the existing literature within the dispositive and considered the extent to which it provides a body of knowledge and performed objectivity upon which the professional discourses about

cultural participation rely¹⁴. This has resulted in an analysis of the existing literature that foregrounds the different ways in which cultural participation - and in particular the problem of cultural non-participation - has been constructed, understood and represented in the existing research. In doing so, this has allowed the researcher to interrogate and reconsider the familiar and taken for granted knowledge about the subject that the researcher may have brought with them to their endeavour and which is to be understood as part of the dispositive under analysis.

Given the nature of the discipline and the extent to which the primary purpose of this approach to existing research is to delineate the field of knowledge, both grey and peer-reviewed literature has been considered relevant. In selecting sources a two-fold approach was undertaken. Firstly, the bibliographies of government policy texts were analysed in order to identify those texts and authors that appeared most regularly. This was done on the assumption that their prominence meant that they were indicative of the structures of knowledge upon which the problem construction of cultural non-participation was based. Simultaneously, key disciplinary journals were analysed – for example *Cultural Trends*, *International Journal of Arts Management*, *International Journal of Cultural Policy*, *Journal of Arts Management*, *Law and Society* - the bibliographies of relevant articles likewise providing an indication of knowledge claims most commonly employed in relation to the problem construction under analysis.

1.4.2 Policy texts as data

Schwartz-Shea & Yanow argue that following things is a key characteristic of much interpretative research and that they believe this should be guided by “the

¹⁴ While the researcher accepts that such an approach is risky as it can mean questioning existing power relations in a field, it should be remembered that the field of academia is based on the belief that all knowledge is uncertain (Alvesson and Sandberg, 2011a), researchers tend towards conformism (Kuhn, 1970) and theoretical developments partly come from challenging fundamental assumptions (Tsoukas and Knudsen, 2004). As such they believe that such alternative and critical approaches should be welcomed.

intertextual trail from initial document¹⁵ to related ones” (2012, p.97). Because the root of the puzzle that had inspired the research was the Scottish Government’s inception of a national indicator on cultural engagement, this part of the data generation process began with the indicator itself, in particular its existence and the statistical analysis that was published as part of the reporting for the Scottish Household Survey (SHS). This was complemented with the collation and analysis of texts in which the problem of cultural non-participation or the value of cultural participation were explicitly referenced. Central and local government, Creative Scotland, and the organisations that they fund produced the majority of these texts¹⁶.

While the study focused on cultural policy in Scotland, devolution remains in its relative infancy and thus cultural policy in Scotland is significantly influenced by its shared history with that elsewhere in the UK and continued relationship as part of the wider UK (Schlesinger, 2009b). As such, the research also looked at relevant texts produced elsewhere in the UK as evidence of a common understanding of the problem construction born out of a shared discursive history¹⁷. While the process outlined above ultimately resulted in the analysis of many documents, it is a smaller number that have been analyzed in closest detail and that have been used to provide the direct quotations employed in the discussion chapters that follow (see Table 1 for a list of these documents).

1.4.3 Qualitative interviews as data

As discussed earlier, in interpretative research “the reliability and generalizability of research findings can be enhanced by combining different types of research materials, interviews, and written texts, and by contextual triangulation” (Talja, 1999, p.473). Initial sources of data should be extended by

¹⁵ Schwartz-Shea and Yanow understand a document as any relevant site, artifact, or discourse within the field of study.

¹⁶ New texts were sometimes identified as a result of being referenced within an existing text under analysis. Other times it was the result of having been mentioned in an interview.

¹⁷ As such, the findings of this research should not be understood as being specific to Scotland, but rather as an indicative case of how the problem of cultural non-participation is constructed across Europe (See Stevenson *et. al.* (2015) for a discussion about the problematisation of cultural non-participation in a European context).

making explicit comparisons between different settings or contexts in order to identify regularities in the logics employed, which can be identified through repeatedly occurring descriptions, explanations, arguments and subjects (Wetherell and Potter, 1988). In discourse analysis this is also understood as allowing the researcher to analyse the different planes on which the discourses exists and are maintained (Wodak and Meyer, 2009). As such, the analysis of policy texts and existing research was complemented with an additional form of data in the form of qualitative interviews. These were primarily conducted with individuals working in organisations that receive some degree of state subsidy on the basis of their contribution towards supporting cultural participation, thus allowing the researcher access to a professional plane of discourse about the problem construction under analysis.

Title	Year	Author	Weblink
Results from the Scottish Household Survey	2009/2015	Scottish Government	http://www.gov.scot/Topics/Statistics/16002/PublicationCulture
Culture Delivers	2008	Scottish Government	http://www.gov.scot/Resource/Doc/255857/0075838.pdf
Cultural Policy: Widening Access to the Arts and Culture (webpage)	2010	Scottish Government	http://www.gov.scot/Topics/ArtsCultureSport/arts/Archive/CulturalPolicy/workinggroup
Past, Present & Future: Culture and Heritage in an Independent Scotland. Culture Secretary's speech on culture in Scotland	2013	Fiona Hyslop / Scottish Government	http://www.gov.scot/News/Speeches/Culture-Heritage05062013
Public Engagement Application Guidelines 2014	2014	Creative Scotland	http://www.creativescotland.com/_data/assets/pdf_file/0007/24838/Public-Engagement-Guidelines-2014-v1-1.pdf
Unlocking Potential, Embracing Ambition: Creative Scotland's Ten Year Plan	2014	Creative Scotland	http://www.creativescotland.com/what-we-do/the-10-year-plan
National Indicator on Cultural Engagement (webpage)	2015	Scottish Government	http://www.gov.scot/About/Performance/scotPerforms/indicator/culture
Regular Funding 2015-18: About the portfolio	2015	Creative Scotland	http://www.creativescotland.com/funding/funding-programmes/regular-funding
Creative Scotland The Guide to Open Project Funding 2014-15	2015	Creative Scotland	http://www.creativescotland.com/_data/assets/pdf_file/0003/28695/The-Guide-to-Open-Project-Funding-2014-15-v1-1.pdf

Table 1: List of primary texts analysed for this study

Interviews are less commonly employed as a method in discourse analysis of this kind (Cameron, 2013) and their inclusion in the current study is part of its originality¹⁸. However, where they are employed, in addition to offering access to an alternative discursive plane, they also offer an opportunity to observe how the complex and ostensibly contradictory discourses of the field are negotiated to construct what the interviewee believes is the most appropriate representation of reality at any particular point. However it is important to note that the speaking subject is not understood as the originator of a statement and so the aim of employing interviews in a discourse analysis is not to capture the interviewees' supposedly authentic intentions, meanings or experiences (Talja, 1999), but rather to view the interview as a speech event within the dispositive (Cameron, 2013). It is a speech event in which the interviewees both account for themselves and their practices in relation to the discursive structures that give the interview meaning. Multiple discourses will always be evident in any interview as there are multiple ways in which any practice can be understood and spoken about. However they are not all equally acceptable in relation to the dispositive in which the speech event occurs (Foucault, 1972). For the meaning of an answer is not a straightforward matter of external or internal reference, but also depends on the local and broader discursive structures in which the utterance is embedded at that moment (Wetherell and Potter, 1988). Furthermore, in formulating their statements the speaker adopts various voices¹⁹ dependent on the dispositive in which they are speaking, and their discursive position relative to the interviewer within it (Talja, 1999). In so doing they allow the researcher to better understand the subjects that the discourse brings in to being and how those subjects are defined in opposition to their possible alternatives (Foucault, 1972).

¹⁸ While cultural policy has been analysed discursively, it does not tend to be the case that interviews have been employed as discursive speech events in which the reproduction of discursive logics can be witnessed and participated in by the researcher.

¹⁹ Discourse analysis emphasizes that subjects are not as one-dimensional, sovereign, and static as is commonly assumed, because in different social contexts and speech situations, the individual uses variable linguistic resources and moves between different discourses quite naturally and skilfully (Talja, 1999, p.470).

1.4.4 Selection of interviewees

Wherever possible, interpretive research rejects the normative language of scientific research as it fails to fit the realities of its methods. As such, when seeking to carry out interviews it was the principle of exposure (Schwartz-Shea & Yanow 2012) that was paramount, as opposed to any pretense about the selection of a sample over which the researcher had unproblematic control. The selection of interviewees is part of the credibility and trustworthiness of the thesis - its internal validity (Silverman, 2010) - and as such potential interviewees were selected on the belief that they had “appropriate experience, those people who have been through the critical events, career paths, or social routines and rituals” (Lindlof and Taylor, 2011, p.179) relevant to the field of knowledge under analysis. In particular they were selected on the assumption that they would feel able and proficient to talk about the problem of cultural non-participation. As such, the majority of individuals approached were working in or for organisations receiving public subsidy. In addition, some interviews were also conducted with central and local government employees; those with responsibility for distributing public subsidy to support cultural participation; and artists employed to conduct projects intended to increase cultural participation²⁰. What these individuals shared was their experiential relevance (Rudestam and Newton, 2015) to the current study, as to a greater or lesser degree all of them were required as part of their professional practice to work towards increasing participation in culture and thus their role and the activities they carry out are part of the same dispositive in which the problem is constructed.

As the roles and practices of these individuals have been understood as part of the dispositive under analysis, the interviewees were simultaneously

²⁰ While practicalities meant that preference was given to individuals within a closer vicinity to the researcher, no limits were placed on where interviewees could be located. All interviews were conducted at a location chosen by the interviewee. Ethical conduct throughout the study adhered to the basic precepts of consent, confidentiality and trust. Ethical approval was secured from Queen Margaret University’s Research committee and all interviewees were provided with a spoken description of the project - see Appendix 2.01 - and provided their oral consent. In order to encourage interviewees to speak more freely, confidentiality was assured from the outset of the interview.

understood by the researcher as being both *constructed in* and *users of* the discourses under analysis²¹. On the one hand, they were constructed in discourse as individuals who would be able, through their actions, to support the objective of increasing cultural participation – hence why they were chosen for these interviews²². While on the other, as users of discourse they were able to provide evidence of how the problem of cultural non-participation is constructed, what discursive logics are employed, and how they observe and interpret their own identity and practice as subject and object about which truths can be known.

It should be noted that the researcher had originally intended to also include non-participants in their sample. As such, two individuals who, in the SHS, would statistically be labelled as non-participants were interviewed during the early stages of data generation. However this line of inquiry was not pursued due to an early realisation by the researcher that the act of seeking out individuals and applying the label of the non-participant to them was replicating part of the discursive practice of the dispositive. In seeking them out for interview, the researcher was writing a discursive identity onto these individuals that they had not chosen to adopt and yet were being asked to speak as a representative of. Furthermore, as the focus of the research increasingly coalesced, it became clear that the object of study was the discursive construction of both the problem of non-participation and the identity of the non-participant. As shall be discussed in the analysis, these discursive constructions are maintained and reproduced by the professionals that dominate the field of cultural policy. Those individuals that the researcher was labelling as non-participants were not users of these discourses and as such their interviews did not exhibit the discursive logics that the researcher was seeking to analyse and understand. While it is acknowledged that there would be merit in exploring the discourses that such individuals do use in relation to

²¹ Throughout the discussion and analysis that follows, their responses will be utilised as such.

²² In this regard, the very action of selecting them for interview becomes a discursive act that affirms the position of these individuals within the dispositive under analysis.

their own cultural practice, it was felt that there was not the scope within this thesis to do so satisfactorily and that given the conclusions of this study any such interviews should not impose the identity of the non-participant onto any interviewees.

1.4.5 The sample

When conducting research such as this, it is easy to become fixated on securing the 'right amount' of interviews. However, to do so is to privilege the quantitative over the qualitative with no automatic improvement in the quality of what is then available for analysis. Even what seems like a small amount of qualitative data can prove to be a rich source, indeed Schwartz-Shea and Yanow (2012) argue that ten in-depth interviews can provide more than enough data for a credible study of this type. For the current research it was ultimately the practicalities of being a lone researcher that influenced how many interviewees were spoken to. Altogether 42 in-depth interviews of between sixty and ninety minutes were conducted, generating over 55 hours of recorded conversations.

The participants are listed alphabetically below (Table 2) and although their names and organisations are offered here to add to the credibility of the research, in the discussion and analysis they are referred to numerically²³ for two important reasons. Firstly, this is in order to ensure that quotes cannot be apportioned to a specific interviewee, for when oral consent was requested interviewees were told that confidentiality would be ensured in the use of direct quotations. This commitment to confidentiality was offered so as to allow interviewees to feel relaxed in the interviews, encourage them to speak freely, and to avoid them feeling any need to self-censor their responses. Secondly, although confidentiality could have been maintained while still acknowledging the 'type'²⁴ of interviewee that the quote had come from, it was felt that to do so would lead the analysis towards presenting any differences between what each interviewee said as examples of alternative discourses, rather than situated

²³ The number does not relate to the order in which interviewees are listed in the table.

²⁴ For example if it was a funder, manager of a national organisation, manager of a local organisation etc.

variations of the same discourses, sharing the same discursive logics with regards to the problem of non-participation. This is important, because as shall become clear throughout the analysis, irrespective of any interviewee's particular circumstances and the answers that they gave, they all employed a common discursive logic based on second order assumptions about the identity of the non-participant, the problem of non-participation, and the practices by which it should be addressed. As such, and as shall be made clear in Chapter 6, what was of greatest importance was their shared identity as a cultural professional, irrespective of the particular job role in which this identity was practiced.

1.4.6 Interview conduct

While the majority of interviews were recorded, as part of the researcher seeking oral consent²⁵ interviewees were always informed that this was an option and some declined to have a permanent record of the conversation made²⁶. Initial interviews were semi-structured, making use of an interview guide (Lindlof and Taylor, 2011) that consisted of a loose listing of topics and questions that the researcher felt would open up the discursive construction of the problem and that were based on the ongoing analysis of the research and written policy texts. Examples of the typical form that such questions took include:

- What can you tell me about the national indicator on cultural engagement?
- What does the government mean when it states that it wants to increase participation with culture?
- How would you describe your own cultural participation?
- How do you identify non-participants with whom to work?
- Why is it important that people participate in culture?
- What sort of things does your organisation do to support increasing cultural participation?

²⁵ See Appendix 2.01 for a copy of the information leaflet given to Interviewees in order to seek their informed consent to contribute to the study.

²⁶ In these instances the researcher was able to make notes throughout the interview.

Name	Organisation	Name	Organisation
Ali Hill	Bongo Club	Jon Morgan	FST
Ali Rae	National Museums Scotland	Kate Wimpres	North Edinburgh Arts
Alison Reeves	WHALE	Laura Bennison	National Museums Scotland
Alistair Evans	Creative Scotland	Lindsay Robinson	Edinburgh Council
Beth Dynowski	Freelance Artist	Lucy Forde	Scottish Chamber Orchestra
Brian McMaster	EIF/Science Festival	Lucy Vaughan	Lyceum
Caitlin Page	Fruitmarket Gallery	Mark O'Neil	Glasgow Life
Caroline Docherty	Creative Scotland	Michael Clarke	National Galleries of Scotland
Catherine Cassidy	Scottish Ballet	Mike Griffiths	Scottish Government
Cllr Richard Lewis	City of Edinburgh Council	Rami Ousta	BEMIS
Diane Champion	Scottish Government	Rod White	Filmhouse
Emma Black	Surgeons Hall	Ros Lamont	The Audience Business
Fiona Bradley	Fruitmarket Gallery	Sally Hobson	Edinburgh International Festival
Gary Roden	Playhouse	Sambrooke Scott	Creative Scotland
Gavin Crichton	Active Inquiry Theatre Company	Sarah Price	Edinburgh Printmakers
Geraldine Heaney	Participatory Artist	Sarah Saunders	National Galleries of Scotland
Gillian Harrison	Voluntary Arts Scotland	Sarah Yearsley	ENGAGE Scotland
Ginnie Atkinson	Stills/Film Festival	Simon Bateson	Take One Action Film Festival
Graeme Busfield	Non Participant	Simon Sharkey	National Theatre Scotland
James Allenby	Dancebase	Steve Bruce	Non Participant
Joanna Baker	Edinburgh International Festival	Suzi Morrice	Dundee Rep

Table 2: List of interviewees spoken to for this study

Questions were intended to be generative (Rubin and Rubin, 2005) so were constructed as stimulations intended to encourage an extended response from the interviewees. This approach would generally then lead to additional discussion and probing in order to further explore the discursive logic that the

interviewee's initial responses were employing. As the interviews progressed, the discussion was allowed to become increasingly conversational and more akin to the "river and channel approach" (Rubin and Rubin, 2005, p.145) of interviewing. This flexible approach meant that while interviewees were free to define the scope of their answers, the interviewer was able to ensure that their interaction generated extended dialogue about the key areas of interest, thus providing richer data for analysis from which greater understanding about the discursive structures might be gained. Furthermore, while the utterances produced on the basis of established discourses are normally received simply as 'grammatical' that is, as logical and believable descriptions of how things are (Foucault, 1972), this approach allowed the interviewer to foreground the discourses being employed through probing interviewees on the taken for granted facts that they would employ to in order to legitimise the logics upon which the discourses they were using relied (Talja, 1999).

1.5 Data Analysis

The thesis offered here is the textual representation of what Howarth (2010) describes as the practice of articulation. This is a process of analysis that links specific theoretical and empirical elements together so as to account for a problematised phenomenon and to problematise its continued acceptance. As has been outlined above, interpretive research is an "iterative, intertwining processes of access, generation and analysis" (Yanow & Schwartz-Shea 2013, p.204) each of which is in constant relationship with another. While Yanow describes this as abduction, Howarth (2010) describes it as a retroductive form of analysis that is conducted through a back and forth relationship with the available empirical data until the researcher is persuaded that the putative *explans* clears away the confusion and fits the phenomenon that they are researching (see also Braun and Clarke, 2006). The section that follows offers a brief summary of how this process has been undertaken in the present research.

1.5.1 Logics of critical explanation

As has been discussed above, the data generated are understood as discursive work concerning the topic in question (Talja, 1999) and as such part of the

dispositive under analysis. Therefore, the primary value of the data lies not in what they directly present but in the potential they afford the researcher to access and analyse what Howarth (2010) describes as the logics of critical explanation. Discursive logics provide answers to questions about the nature and function of various social practices because they capture “both the rules that govern a meaningful practice, as well as the conditions that make the operation of such rules possible, whilst at the same time rendering them vulnerable to change” (Howarth, 2010, p.325). Three types of discursive logic exist, the social, the political and the fantasmatic (Howarth, 2010). Respectively these logics allow social practice to be characterised, contingent social relations to be justified and different social subjects to be attached to specific identities. Together they function to naturalise the relations of domination that exist in society, for as Wittgenstein (1971) has argued: in normal language each expression not only states, but also evaluates. The purpose of analysis is to foreground those logics, highlight the implicit evaluations they contain and to consider what alternative values they silence.

Adapting advice offered by Potter and Wetherell (1987), the researcher’s attempt to understand the logics of critical explanation upon which the problem of cultural non-participation relies began with three phases of analysis, the first of which consisted of three steps. The first step involved the analysis of inconsistencies and internal contradictions within a single piece of core data – namely the SHS and its associated report on cultural participation. The second step consisted of looking for repeatedly occurring descriptions, explanations, and arguments within the data, while the third consists of identifying the basic assumptions and presuppositions upon which these arguments were based. Practically these steps were achieved through a close reading and critical questioning of the texts informed by questions 1, 2 and 4 of Bacchi’s (2009) WPR method²⁷.

²⁷ What is the problem represented to be? What are the assumptions and presuppositions that underlie this representation of the problem? What is left unproblematic in this representation of the problem? Where are the silences?

The culmination of this stage of the research involved the researcher stepping back from the data in order to formalise their thinking about the problem representation evident in the texts. This was done through presenting and publishing their work thus far (see Stevenson, 2013b) as not only did this offer an opportunity for critical reflection on the perspective they were reaching but also an opportunity to test their nascent theories amongst a “tribunal of critical scholars, practitioners and policymakers” (Howarth, 2010, p.325) in order to seek their evaluation of the researcher’s critiques. Although any acceptance gained does not guarantee the validity of a proto-explanation, within the discursive field of academia, such discursive practices are central to the researcher’s final conclusions being accepted as credible explanations.

Having formed some preliminary theories about the discursive logics of the problem construction, the research then progressed to explore these further through looking for their use and variation across other discursive planes in which the problem construction was also present. As such, the researcher began to conduct qualitative interviews and in doing so was able to reflect on what kinds of logics the interviewees’ various statements were based on, how these logics produced different kinds of truths, and what these truths might accomplish when employed by agents in a field (Wetherell and Potter, 1988). For when asked to speak about the social world and their practices within it, individuals cannot invent new words to express their understanding every time they speak and as such have to use the same expressions that have been used countless times before (Volosinov, 1986). Therefore, “historically formed discourses are repositories of starting points, definitions and themes that position the speakers as they give meanings to phenomena” (Talja, 1999, p.470). This meant that although the interviews were far more complex and rich sites of discourse than the texts, a shared vocabulary of discursive logic could still be identified between them.

While the written texts could be analyzed as found, interviews required further preparation and as such the first 24 interviews were transcribed in detail, generating over 200,000 words for analysis. As the kind of fine detail necessary for an approach such as Conversation Analysis was not required, what was produced were thorough orthographic accounts that included all verbal utterances and those non-verbal utterances or pauses that it was believed at the time to be pertinent to the analysis. However, as the project progressed, and based upon the recommendations of Silverman (2010, p.35) and Gillham (2005, p.119) transcriptions were conducted more selectively, focusing only on those interviews or parts thereof that it was felt were of particular relevance to advancing the researcher's developing analysis of the problem construction. This sort of selective transcription is appropriate for lone researchers as it allows a greater proportion of their time to be spent conducting additional interviews and is based on the assertion that it is from initial sources that the majority of understanding is reached. This means that "subsequent interviews add content but little in the way of new categories. [As such] there comes a point where it is more economical to listen for new or exemplar statements" (Gillham, 2005, p.122) than to slavishly copy out all that has been said. Therefore, in the latter stages of the research, active listening was employed to seek further evidence of the discursive logics already identified as important or to identify if there were any discursive logics that had not previously been identified elsewhere.

Interviews and transcriptions were completed in small batches of four or five, and periods of analysis took place after each batch of interviews had been completed. The analysis involved the researcher conducting numerous close readings of the transcriptions, manually marking up the transcripts with notes about the critical logics that they identified. Once again, it was questions 1, 2 and 4 of Bacchi's (2009) method that provided the broad framework under which this close reading was conducted. In practice, what this initially resulted in was a list of the various subjects, objects, and keywords that were most common in the interviewee's responses. This list was populated with quotations

from the interviews in which the various discursive components had been employed. In turn, this initial analysis then informed the questioning employed in latter interviews where the researcher sought to better understand the critical logics (Howarth, 2010) through which these discursive components were related. As such, latter stages of analysis focused on how the various components could be described, what relationships between them were possible, and what arguments and explanations were offered with regards to these relationships. Once again, a process of close reading and note taking culminated in the production of a distilled list of quotations felt by the researcher to be indicative of the critical logics that were being repeatedly employed in the data.

The endpoint of such a process of analysis is the systematic linking of the subjects, objects, descriptions, accounts, and arguments to the particular discursive structure of which the researcher believes them all to be a part (Talja, 1999, p.466). Practically, this was conducted through manually mapping all of the discursive components identified and the possible relationships between them. Finally, having made visible the critical logics of the problem construction within the field of cultural policy, the researcher returned to consider the remaining questions that Bacchi (2009) poses. Namely, what are the effects that the existence of the problem produces, and how might these effects might be disrupted?

1.5.2 Credibility

The criteria of validity and reliability are very different in interpretative research. Data has been analysed as discursive components, not as facts about how the world really is. No research data can therefore, in themselves, offer a more authentic, unbiased, or accurate description of reality. Likewise no researcher's interpretation of the data can be argued to be any truer than another's. As such, the conclusions of this research "are not generalizable as descriptions of how things are, but as how a phenomenon can be seen or interpreted [since] there is no logical reason to doubt that the particular model

of argumentation it offers could not be used by any competent member of society” (Talja, 1999, p.472).

This might lead some to argue the process outlined above results in conclusions that are no more than opinion. While the researcher would acknowledge that what is presented is their interpretation, their way of making sense of what they set out to consider, they would equally contend that it is not simply their opinion. Instead they would argue it is insight that is the product of an extensive period of intentional and focused thought about a topic. It is the product of a degree of immersive and sustained thinking that one cannot normally afford to such a narrow subject. And it is the product of self-conscious thought in which ongoing reflection has allowed the researcher to develop a heightened awareness of the processes of analysis that led to the conclusions reached. It is on these bases that the current study is presented as a valid, valuable and credible contribution to knowledge and in doing so the author stresses the role of judgement as a situated ability in which a researching subject “acquires and enacts the capacity to connect to an object, or ‘apply’ a logic to a series of social processes, within a contingent and contestable theoretical framework” (Howarth, 2010, p.327)²⁸.

1.5.3 Critical reflexivity

What a critical approach to interpretative research such as this does require is that the researcher acknowledges their authorial power and as such their productive function within the fields that they study, contribute to and exist within. Understanding is always partial and “there is no vantage point external to the debate from which a disinterested observer can make their observations” (Schwartz-Shea and Yanow, 2012, p.79). No researcher has the capacity to

²⁸ Howarth offers an extended explanation of this concept, a brief summary of which will be offered here. His argument is that having “immersed oneself in a given discursive field consisting of texts, documents, interviews and social practices, the researcher draws on his or her theoretical expertise to make particular judgments [...] and must then decide upon its overall import for the problem investigated [...]”. An integral part of judging whether a particular empirical phenomenon is relevant to the discussion “consists in deciding what [its] precise relevance and importance is in constructing a narrative that explains a phenomenon” (Howarth, 2010).

analyze the world through a filter that allows it to be seen as it really is when no one is looking (Geertz, 1973) and neither can they stand outside of discourse (Bacchi, 2000). While it might be hoped that the methodological approach taken will mean that, to some extent, the researcher “transcends their acculturation” (Rorty, 1991, p.13) and in so doing has assimilated a multiplicity of world-views, attitudes, beliefs, and values, the epistemological basis of any interpretive research demands an acknowledgment of the researcher’s status as a positioned and active agent within the debate and the degree to which this may also have shaped both the data generated and the conclusions reached.

Practically, this means it has been important for the researcher to remain alert to their ideological imperatives, epistemological presuppositions, and subjective, inter-subjective and normative beliefs about the area under investigation (Denzin and Lincoln, 2013). Critical reflexivity is understood as a significant marker of quality in interpretive research because it makes both the research process and the assertions that arise from it more transparent and credible “thereby maximising the trustworthiness of the researcher’s claims to knowledge as voiced in a research manuscript” (Schwartz-Shea and Yanow, 2012, p.104). There are those who choose to explicitly address this through adoption of the authorial ‘I’ so as to make their own presence clear at every point in the analysis. However, this is an unsatisfactory solution to a wicked problem given that ‘I’ is “not a unified subject, a fixed identity, or that solid mass covered with layers of superficialities one has gradually to peel off before one can see its true face. ‘I’ is, itself, infinite layers” (Trinh, 1989, cited in Conquergood, 1991, p.184). To claim a stable identity in order to describe and deconstruct a constructed reality is as flawed as the notion of the researcher as objective intermediary. Thus, the language used in this thesis primarily adopts the traditional, modernist, impersonal and seemingly objective narrative of positivist research. However it does so with the clear acknowledgement that the written output must only be understood as one voice, one interpretation and one way of understanding the matters discussed.

Summary

Chapter 1 has outlined the methodology adopted and discussed how this methodology has shaped the entire approach that has been taken in producing this research. Situating cultural policy analysis within the wider discipline of policy studies, the chapter began by highlighting the extent to which a diverse number of accounts about the nature of policy and policy-making have led to numerous approaches to conducting the study of policy. After briefly explaining the interpretative (or argumentative) turn in policy analysis, the discussion then moved on to detail how, for the present study, policy has been understood as discourse. In particular, the discussion has focused on how the approach taken has been informed by the Foucauldian concepts of problematisation, the dispositive, relations of knowledge/power, and the discursive construction of subject identities within a discourse. After clarifying the research questions, the chapter then provided detail about both data generation and analysis, with existing research, policy texts, and qualitative interviews all having been analyzed in an attempt to understand the logics of critical explanation upon which the problem of non-participation has been constructed.

Chapter 2 will now move on to offer an analysis of the existing research into cultural participation. Specifically, it will consider how cultural participation has been constructed as a distinct object of knowledge about which truths can be claimed. It will specifically consider the claims that have been made about the value of cultural participation as a distinct type of human practice, and the explanations that have been offered about why there are observable differences in the extent to which various people undertake this practice.

Chapter 2 – Social and political logics: Constructing cultural participation as an object of enquiry

As Brook notes: “the factors that influence whether individuals attend the arts²⁹ have been the subject of a considerable amount of research in the UK, particularly during the last decade [with a focus on] how individual demographic and socio-economic characteristics influence engagement in cultural activities” (2013, p.145). Economists, sociologists and psychologists have all offered frameworks and models that make assertions about what cultural participation is and offer explanations of the observable differences between the cultural participation choices of various individuals. This work has been both built on and contributed to by those working in the field of arts management - and in particular arts marketing – resulting in a diversity of observations, assertions and theories about the different patterns of human practice that the quantitative figures regularly show.

As has been outlined in Chapter 1, this study has not approached the existing research about cultural participation as a value neutral repository of knowledge to which the present study seeks to contribute. Research is thought, and as Foucault argues thought is an act that establishes an object and a subject as well as the possible relationships between them. Yet it is also the “motion by which one detaches oneself from [the object...] and reflects on it as a problem” (Foucault, 2003 [1984], p.23). However there can be no absolute detachment from discursive structures and therefore no position exists outside of them from which they can be understood. For in order for any research about cultural participation to have any meaning, it must either be viewed as an explicit product of its discourses or understood in relation to them.

²⁹ The apparent synonymy between the arts and culture will be discussed in this chapter and Chapter 4

And so research is an integral part of how problems are constructed, as it provides structure, objectivity and credibility to the discursive logics upon which the problem construction relies. It generates analysis that is employed as evidence the problem exists, frames the ways in which it can be understood, and suggests the type of responses that are accepted as appropriate. As such, this chapter now offers an overview of research that both produces and reproduces discourses of cultural participation, in particular that which contributes to the discursive logic that constructs non-participation as a problem. In doing so it will specifically address research question 1 – How has the problem been constructed as an object of knowledge?

There is a broad range of publications that have been both produced by and taken into the discourses that construct the problem under analysis. While a wide range of this research will be discussed below, it is inevitably a partial selection from all that might be considered relevant. As such, the selection is based upon that that the researcher believes to be most indicative of, and influential to, the problem construction. Such researcher led selection is not unusual in a study of this kind, as problematisation research tends to involve focusing on that which allows the researcher to identify and challenge the dominant assumptions underlying the research into their topic (Alvesson and Sandberg, 2011).

Focusing on two of Howarth's (2010) three logics of critical explanation, it will first be argued that existing research is generative of social logic in defining culture as a distinct field of human activity, and participation with culture as a uniquely valuable practice. Secondly it is proposed that existing research is also generative of political logic through offering explanations and justifications for the contingent relations between the various subjects and objects that are understood as being possible in relation to this practice. Central to this discussion will be a consideration of the ways in which such differences can be constructed as a problem, in particular as a problem requiring the intervention of the state.

2.1 Defining culture as a distinct field of human practice

Gray (2010) has argued that the contested nature of the central word in cultural policy means that it assumes an importance far greater than it has in other policy areas such as defense, taxation, and education. Schuster (2002a) points towards these definitional difficulties³⁰ as a problem for cultural policy makers, indeed there is a whole strand of research that has considered the contested nature of many of the terms involved in producing and talking about cultural policy and the related confusion that this can bring (Ashley, 2013; McCall, 2009; Gray, 2009; Roodhouse, 2008; Galloway and Dunlop, 2007; Levitas, 2004). While some of this work has been prompted by the growth of the term creative and cultural industries (Miller, 2009; Garnham, 2005), others have focused on attempting to understand what cultural policy can be said to encompass (Bell and Oakley, 2005; Ahearne, 2009; Throsby, 2009; Craik, 2007). Despite this, it is often highlighted how little care is exercised by governments, academics and commentators to explicitly identify which meaning of culture is being employed (Gray, 2009; McGuigan, 2004).

This type of discursive contestation is to be expected within any field of knowledge. As Foucault has argued, freedom within a discursive field is the freedom to take part in “the games of truth which make up the history of our relation to ourselves” what he describes as “the technologies: the intellectual and practical instruments and devices enjoined upon human beings to shape and guide their way of ‘being human’” (cited in Rabinow and Rose, 2003, p.xxi; see also Foucault, 2003b [1982]). This is acknowledged by Burton *et. al.* (2006) who have spoken of a need to surface the various assumptions underlying policy interventions, and as will be discussed in more detail below, the assumptions around the definition, benefits, impacts and value of cultural participation have already been challenged, not least through a critical analysis of the evidence upon which claims are made (Gilmore, 2013; Belfiore and Bennett, 2007a; Belfiore, 2002; Oakley, 2004). However, what has not been

³⁰ What is participation? What is culture? Can definitions be reached at a national let alone international level?

considered to the same degree are the construction of second order assumptions and presuppositions³¹ that are fundamental in maintaining the existence of cultural non-participation as a problem in its own right, the taken for granted 'truths' that make the construction of the problem possible. The first of these is the representation of culture as a distinct field of human practice, and it is this that the first part of the chapter will discuss.

2.1.1 Making culture visible as object about which truths can be known

Connor argues that culture "became visible as a problem" (1992, p.233) in the nineteenth century. Almost immediately, different discourses of culture began to crystalize. Since then substantial research has been published exploring what culture can, should, and is understood to be. Indeed differing disciplines have established distinct theories of culture and in so doing have established various frameworks within which the concept can be known, discussed and employed³². There is not the scope here to capture this discussion in full, nor to fully draw out the distinctiveness of each stance through comparison between them, however it is important that some of the core theoretical and disciplinary understandings of culture are summarised, not least because of the extent to which they have, and are likely to continue to shape the discourses with which the problem under analysis is constructed.

At one end of the spectrum, culture is an aesthetic artifact, a material object that is the product of a certain type of labor but imbued with some symbolic meaning. At the opposite end, there is a conception of culture that refers to a continuous process of rule and meaning negotiation in which culture is "not a thing but a political process of contestation over the power to define key concepts, including that of culture itself" (Wright, 1998, p.14, see also Holden, 2012). Somewhere between the two, culture is understood a way of life shared

³¹ The author acknowledges that this will always be an impossible task to achieve in full, however as Kendall and Wickham argue, it is the "process of attempting to escape the grip of second order judgements which is central to the Foucauldian approach" (1999, p.13). There need not necessarily be complete success but a genuine attempt must be shown.

³² Eagleton (2000) offers a review of these idea from a humanities perspective while Griswold (2013) presents a consideration of the term from within the social sciences.

amongst a group of social agents who classify and represent their experiences in a common manner or worldview (Williams, 1981). However, irrespective of which position is adopted, each is a way of dividing up human practice in a manner that makes it uncertain and unfamiliar. In so doing culture is “problematized as an object to be known” (Foucault, 2003a [1984], p.23) and thus becomes an object about which games of truths can be played to the advantage of some individuals over others. What follows is a summary of the knowledge claims about culture that are integral to the manner in which cultural non-participation has been constructed as a problem.

2.1.2 Culture as a process of refinement and growth

In particular, and as shall be explored in more depth in Chapter 4, it is a late eighteenth and early nineteenth century European understanding of culture that most significantly influences the dominant discourses about cultural participation today (Bell and Oakley, 2015). Within this discourse, cultural participation is presented as a process of refinement and growth through which an individual reaches the apogee of human development, a progression towards the platonic ideal. In relation to this discourse, any discussion of cultural policy must acknowledge the importance of Matthew Arnold and his seminal work of 1869: *Culture and Anarchy* (Arnold 2009 [1869]). As Peterson (1963) notes, in this work Arnold sets out to discover what culture is, what good it can do for society, and if it is really necessary. He finds culture to be the study of perfection, which he contrasts with the anarchy that he ascribes to the mood of unrest and uncertainty that prevailed at the time, a mood that was associated with the encroaching civilisation of the industrial revolution.

Arnold’s definition of culture as the best that has been thought and said in the world encapsulates the common rhetoric of nineteenth century intellectuals, which portrays culture as a repository of human values that must be protected against the mechanised modernity that threatens the fabric of civilised society (Griswold, 2013; Bennett, 2001). While Arnold’s understanding of the social

quality of being civilized was not the same as the quality of *kultiviert*³³ associated with German Romanticism (Elias, 1994) they do share a common logic in their belief in an opposition between culture and society, and in which culture gains its own agency. This is a Romantic distinction in which culture is the humanising and harmonising agent of modern society – it is through culture, and not scientific knowledge, that individuals find meaning - a view shared by influential sociologist Max Weber (Griswold, 2013) and that is still promoted today by those such as critic and cultural commentator Roger Scruton (2011). Despite Weber's concurrence with this position, this discourse is primarily associated with the discipline of the humanities and the practice of defending the best of culture as represented in an accepted canon of works (F.R. Leavis being significantly influential with regard to this practice). However it must be acknowledged that contemporary humanities scholars take a more critical perspective than that of their forebears. Thus while they doubtless promote a canon of sorts, few would endorse the same narrow hierarchy that Arnold and Leavis would have recognised, for fear of the elitist connotations that accompany it within the post-modern, post-colonial, multicultural and liberal society in which these discussions now take place. Yet, as Griswold (2013) and Bell and Oakley (2015) both note, despite these connotations this notion of culture does persist and in common usage may arguably be the most widely employed.

Barker (2006) acknowledges that the label of 'art' is also regularly employed to describe culture in the sense outlined above. However as a term, art is only moderately less problematic than culture and there is an equally extensive history of philosophical thought having been applied to its definition. Theories on the nature of art include aestheticism, formalism, functionalism, historicism,

³³ "The word *kultiviert* (cultivated) is very close to the Western concept of civilization. To some extent, it represents the highest form of being civilized. Even people and families who have accomplished nothing *kulturell* can be *kultiviert*. Like the term 'civilized', *kultiviert* refers primarily to the form of people's conduct or behavior. It describes a social quality of people, their housing, their manners, their speech, their clothing, unlike *kulturell*, which does not refer directly to people themselves, but exclusively to particular human accomplishments" (Elias, 2000, p. 6).

proceduralism and institutionalism (see Gordon, 2000 for a review of this topic). Likewise, within the humanities the term 'art history' has increasingly been superseded by 'art histories' as scholars have sought to acknowledge that the classical western canon is one of many possible histories about the production of such objects, albeit one that has been extensively naturalised through the social institution that it both informs and is informed by (Edwards, 1999). However as is the case with the concept of culture, all of the various narratives about art share a common belief, namely that there is such a thing as art, produced through a specific form of practice, and that the objects to which the label refers provide opportunities for a unique type of social interaction that leads to human³⁴ refinement, growth and development.

2.1.3 Discursive binaries

Within the logics of this discourse - in which culture exists as a distinct field of human activity – cultural participation becomes a practice that is undertaken through specific types of interactions with specific types of objects. Furthermore, a hierarchy is generally employed in which some objects and interactions are seen as being closer to perfection and thus more capable of cultivating the human spirit (Arnold, 2009 [1869]). This form of culture is also fragile, constantly under threat from an encroaching commercial utilitarianism (Adorno and Horkheimer, 2005 [1944]) in which the sheer quantity of industrialised mass culture (Leavis and Thompson, 1933) results in the atrophy of authentic individual cultural practice (Simmel, 1968 [1911]). Such a conception of culture thus assumes a need for some degree of preservation and protection by the state. In this sense, the objects and activities with which one might participate have traditionally been understood as a rarefied form of 'high culture' portrayed in binary opposition to other forms, most commonly:

- **folk culture** – particularly associated with Leavis (1933) who employed this to describe what he believed was the authentic common culture of pre-industrialised communities;

³⁴ Both individually and at a societal level.

- **mass culture** – particularly associated with both Leavis (1933) and Adorno and Horkheimer (2005 [1944]) who employed it to refer to an industrialised culture produced solely as a commodity for economic exchange and as such inauthentic, unsatisfying and manipulative. It is a definition primarily used by those whose discussion focuses on the *production* of culture;
- **popular culture** - used in different ways by different writers (see Storey, 1993 and Danesi, 2015 for an overview) but mainly with regards to: practice that is distinct from, but equivalent to, high culture (for example Gans, 1999 [1974]); as a synonym for mass culture; or as the site at which cultural hegemony is secured or challenged (for example Hall, 1977; Fiske, 1989). It is a definition primarily used by those whose discussion focuses on the *consumption* of culture.

2.1.4 Culture as part of political processes

Such binary relationships are also evidence of alternative discourses about culture that exist alongside that in which it is understood as a process of refinement. Within these discourses culture is not represented as an autonomous civilizing force, but as part of societal systems of stratification in which domination and resistance is variously understood to be taking place. Culture is understood as part of a political process in which different groups seek to exert control over the role, meaning and definition of cultural artifacts. On one hand, dominant societal factions are understood to employ such control as an instrument through which to manage the lives of those they seek to dominate. Alternatively, culture is seen as the manner in which those that the dominant faction seek to dominate resist such oppression and challenge hegemony through being active makers of meaning.

One of the most significant of these discourses is that based upon the work of Adorno and Horkheimer, in particular their essay *The Culture Industry – Enlightenment as mass deception* (2005 [1944]). Similarly to Leavis, they saw mass culture (the products of what they would later define as the Culture

Industry) as conformist, inauthentic and standardized. Their Marxist pedigree meant that they argued such culture was not only contaminated aesthetically but also politically. In offering commodities that purported to be democratic, diversified and consumed by all parts of society, class divisions were concealed behind a mass of artificially differentiated commodities that reified social relations. As such, it is important to note that although the Culture Industry is commonly taken to be synonymous with specific forms of production such as Hollywood movies and pop music, Adorno and Horkheimer's critique is not specifically about the content but its form, intent and production. Their critique argues that realist and representational cultural artifacts are too easily consumed and focus their analysis on the base structures of production and social relations that bring such products and practices into being. As clarified by Adorno in later works (1977; 1978; 1979), this means that manifestations of 'high culture' such as classical music and opera could just as easily be understood as part of the Culture Industry on occasion where their production, form and distribution were intended to promote mass consumption and reify contingent social relations³⁵. As such, Adorno and Horkheimer adhere to a belief in the existence of authentic forms of cultural practice, one that they share with scholars as different as Leavis (1933) and Simmel (1968 [1911]).

A second strand of this discourse was formed through the establishment of the *Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies* at the *University of Birmingham*. The broad aim of the extensive intellectual tradition that developed from here was to attempt to understand cultural objects in all their complex forms and in relation to the political and social context in which they are manifest. While there are numerous influential and much cited authors who were central to the development of this field (Lefebvre, 1947; Hoggart, 1957; Mills, 1959; Hebdige,

³⁵ Given the brevity of this overview it is not possible to address the full complexity of their argument or the criticisms that have been leveled against it. It is, however, important to highlight the assumption in Adorno and Horkheimer's argument that audiences accepted, in an unproblematic fashion, the meaning of work that had been imbued during its production. This was refuted by later cultural studies work in the active audience paradigm (Barker, 1996) in which the audience were understood as active makers of meaning and thus representing popular culture as the site at which cultural hegemony is resisted rather than affirmed (see Chambers, 1990; Fiske 1989; Willis, 1990 for examples of such work).

1979; DeCerteau, 1984), it is the works of Raymond Williams - in particular *Culture is Ordinary* (2014 [1958]) and *Culture in Society* (1983a) – that are perhaps most significant for the extent to which he sought to critique the manner that cultural practice had been disaggregated. In his work, while he contrasts the idea of culture as art [humanities] and culture as a whole way of life [anthropology] he stresses that any attempt to understand culture must seek to understand how these two meanings coexist³⁶. In this regard, such work sought to critique the taken for granted status of everyday life through analysing all forms of signification as part of what he described as the structures of feeling (Williams, 1977) or shared values of a particular culture.

While Williams' work is notable for the extent to which it sought to collapse the division that existed between different discourses of culture, in practice both his analysis and that which has been informed by his perspectives has mostly focused on artistic and intellectual symbolic goods, albeit seeking to have what was understood as the popular culture of the majority valued to the same degree that the high culture of art was (Barker, 2006). The result being that Williams' desire for analytical and definitional convergence has arguably never occurred (Connor, 1992) and however 'ordinary' culture might be understood to be in this tradition, it remains a distinct field of human activity, albeit one that has vastly expanded. For in such research it most commonly remained the case that culture was assumed to be the product of distinct and specifically symbolic practices that were representative of particular subcultures (Thornton, 1997; Hebdige, 1979). As such, the potential for non-participation in popular culture is as possible as it is within the discourse that represents culture as a process of refinement and growth. However as shall be discussed in Chapter 3, what is notable is the extent to which non-participation with practices labelled as popular culture is not a component part of the problem construction under analysis.

³⁶ He further expands on his work in later publications including *Keywords*³⁶ (1983b) in which he offered an analysis of the formation and subsequent alteration of the meaning of the central terms by which we think about western culture and society.

2.2 Constructing cultural participation as a uniquely valuable human practice

Culture and art are not the only terms that are contested within this field. Both participation and engagement are equally disputed and have been constructed, understood and modelled in various ways across a broad variety of disciplines. While there is equally not the scope to consider the full spectrum of this work in detail, it is important to note that while sometimes used synonymously they are also employed as distinct terms. However within the discourse of cultural participation, both terms are employed to refer to a particular type of interaction between a subject and an object that is understood to be uniquely valuable for both the individual and society. The assumptions and knowledge claims made about this unique interaction are the focus of the second part of this chapter.

2.2.1 Defining participation and engagement

Engagement is perhaps the most problematic of these synonyms given that in terms of cultural policy it “is frequently an unexamined term that might embed assumptions and ignore power relationships” (Ashley, 2013, p.261). However, Brown and Novak-Leonard take a less critical perspective and have suggested that “[e]ngagement is often used within the field to describe enrichment or educational activities intended to enhance or deepen audience experiences” (2011a, p.6). In contrast, they define participation as being either receptive (primarily some sort of attendance) or participative. Specifically with regards to cultural participation surveys, this researcher has argued elsewhere (Stevenson, 2013b) that participation is seen as one of two indicators of engagement. An individual is classified as engaged if they have either attended an event as a consumer, or have participated in an activity in which they had a more active role such as reading, singing or painting.

Yet this division is blurred given the increasing adoption by organisations and artists of what they refer to as co-creative practice, an activity that has been noted and empirically considered by Walmsley (2013b) in relation to what is described as audience development: a process in which cultural organisations

attempt to widen the demographics of their audience through particular types of activities. In explaining this practice, Rudman focuses on the relationship between the individual and an organisation, describing co-creation as “a new form of “organisational porosity” – a mindset that allows for a free exchange of creative energy between an arts organisation and its public” (cited in Brown *et al.*, 2011b, p.18)³⁷. Likewise, Brown and Novak Leonard have placed co-creation on their model of audience involvement (2011a) that identifies five stages in order to “illustrate a progression of involvement from spectating – in which the audience member plays only a minor role in the artistic outcome, mostly providing meaning to the artefact – to the point at which there is no conventional audience at all because every person is involved in creating, doing or making” (2011a, p.3). While their model propose co-creation as one point on a spectrum, it is clear that others would associate it with various other points on the spectrum, if not the spectrum in its entirety. Once more, one is faced with the definitional fluidity of the field; for it is evident that co-creation is used in reference to various types of activity. This is perhaps why, in reviewing some of the literature on participation and co-creation, Walmsley proposes that despite their differences the definitions of these two terms both coalesce around the ideas of “collaboration, interaction, invention, participation, experience, value and exchange” (2013b, p.110) between two subjects. Where one subject is understood as part of an audience and the other is an organisation or artist producing cultural objects. Whatever term is employed, engagement, participation or co-creation is understood as a particular type of interaction that is about generating value for those involved.

2.2.2 Definitions of cultural value

Underlying all of the various discourses on cultural participation is the notion of a form of value creation unique to this specific type of human practice. For example, this could be the role the audience has in creating value through giving

³⁷ However as Leadbetter (2009) has noted when explicating his concept of ‘the art of with’, an interest in a more active audience is not new to those producing art. Likewise, Bishop has argued that the arts has a long tradition of viewer participation and “activated spectatorship” (2006, p.78) in which participation is intrinsic to the meaning of the work that is produced.

meaning to the artefacts with which they are presented (Boorsma, 2006) or the values that are created for all the social agents involved in the exchange by virtue of their interaction³⁸ (Grönroos 2011; Grönroos & Voima 2013). Just as was the case in defining culture and cultural participation as an object of knowledge, there is a significant body of work that has sought to understand what is variously described as the value, impact or benefit of cultural participation³⁹. Although the majority of research appears to concur that any value is not an inherent feature of the object but rather something attributed in the interaction, beyond this there is once again significant contestation about the terminology employed or the practicality of undertaking any kind of experimental approach to measuring and evaluating it (Galloway, 2009; Belfiore and Bennett, 2007b; Matarasso, 1997).

Although 'value' 'impact' and 'benefit' are closely related terms they are not wholly synonymous despite the extent to which they are employed as such (Carnwaith and Brown, 2014). Benefit is generally used to refer to a wide range of positive outcomes (both tangible and intangible) that are associated with cultural activity and can be employed in relation to both individuals and communities (Knell and Taylor, 2011; Radbourne *et al.*, 2010; Brown, 2006; McCarthy *et al.*, 2005; Ruiz, 2004). Unlike benefits, impacts can be both positive and negative and generally focus on a specific change that occurs through virtue of an interaction with an activity or organisation (Leadbetter and O'Connor, 2013; DCMS, 2010; Brown, 2006; Matarasso, 1997). While Matarasso (1997) identified 50 potential social impacts of participative arts programmes in his extensive mixed method multiple case study, Ruiz (2004) distils the existing evidence into five categories of impact: personal development; social cohesion; community image/regeneration; health and wellbeing; and education and

³⁸ Referencing its use within the service-dominant logic of contemporary marketing theory, Grönroos distinguishes co-creation as an interaction dependent model of value creation from co-production in which the consumer is actively involved in the production of the product or experience (2011).

³⁹ At the point at which this thesis was submitted, the AHRC published the final report of its three year, Cultural Value Project (Crossick and Kaszynska 2016). As such, the conclusions of this project are not included in this thesis.

learning. Specifically with regards to the impact on individuals, the literature also suggests that there is a progression of impact stages defined by an individual's temporal proximity to the activity in question and experienced in a variety of impact patterns (Carnwaith and Brown, 2014). While there is no framework that explicitly considers the relationship of one to the other it is often implicit that impact leads to benefits for individuals or that benefit for individuals lead to impact for society. Whatever the relationship, given the degree to which research has attempted to measure them, it can be assumed that they are both seen as a potential proxy for what is commonly referred to as cultural value (see Connor, 1992 for a significant discussion of the manner in which different intellectual disciplines have conceived of cultural value, in addition to Holden and Balta, 2012; Holden, 2004, 2006; Throsby, 2001).

The term cultural value is used in cultural economics to refer specifically to the non-economic value created by cultural goods and experiences (Throsby, 2001). However elsewhere it is understood to refer to the process through which cultural organisations produce benefits and impacts for the individual, institution and society (Holden, 2004, 2006). Despite those that question if it is either possible or useful to do so (Bourgeon-Renault, 2000), much discussion has also been expended around the division of cultural value into its constituent components. Distinctions are primarily drawn between instrumental and intrinsic value, (Brown and Novak-Leonard, 2013; Belfiore, 2012; McCarthy *et al.*, 2005; Knell and Taylor, 2011; Radbourne *et al.*, 2010; Orr, 2008; Holden, 2006) where the former is primarily employed in relation to external outcomes associated with broader policy aims, and the latter is seen to refer to that which will accrue to the individual, is specific to cultural participation and is understood as an end in itself.

Despite the prevalence with which this binary is employed, there is much disquiet over the degree to which its use has primarily resulted in what some see as two complementary components of cultural value being presented in conflict or opposition (Joss, 2008; Knell, 2005; Matarasso, 2003; Merli, 2002;

Matarasso, 1997). The result of which has been seen as an increasingly circular and repetitious debate (O'Brien, 2014) in which the intrinsic value of cultural participation is pitted against cultural participation as an instrument to achieve some other purpose⁴⁰. As such, there are those who have sought to move beyond the either/or in proposing models that offer a greater number of value categories while stressing the interdependence of them all. John Holden, for example, has distinguished both between instrumental, intrinsic, and institutional value and use and non-use value (2004, 2006). Likewise, Carnwaith and Brown (2014) offer three senses of value (the value to individuals, the value represented in cultural organisations and the value to society of a thriving cultural sector). Alternatively, Brown (2006) identifies five clusters of benefits while McCarthy *et al* (2005) plot instrumental and intrinsic benefits in relation to a second axis of private and public benefits. What is common amongst all of this work is that they each make truth claims about what cultural value is and the value that cultural participation offers. None seek to disprove the assumption that cultural participation is a unique type of practice, generative of a unique type of value.

2.2.3 Assertions about the value of cultural participation to individuals and society

Given the amount of research that has been done into cultural value, a number of literature reviews have been conducted that attempt to collate their various findings. On behalf of *Arts Council England* (ACE), Reeves undertook a review of the literature related to measuring the economic and social impact of the arts (2002). The empirical research into the impact of culture and the arts has also been reviewed by Coalter (2001), Guetskow (2002), McCarthy *et. al* (2001) and Galloway (2008). In 2010 the DCMS published the findings of its analysis of the

⁴⁰ O'Brien (2010) also stresses that any attempt to understand cultural value cannot simply add up the benefits experienced by individuals as this will result in a partial picture of the value produced through overlooking value that is inherently social and will be produced irrespective of whether it was planned to do so or not.

CASE database⁴¹ (2010), while four years later ACE published two pieces of work, both of which sought to bring together the existing evidence around the value of culture to individuals and society (ACE, 2014; Carnwaith and Brown, 2014). The latter of these two studies explicitly focusing on how individuals benefit from attending and participating in cultural programmes and activities, something that Galloway had also undertaken previously (2006). In addition there are numerous other reviews from the last decade that have, to a greater or lesser degree, attempted a similar task (Spencer-Oatey *et al.*, 2013; Holden and Balta, 2012; O'Brien, 2010; Ruiz, 2004; Keaney, 2006), with a number focusing on particular sites of cultural participation such as museums (Wavell *et al.*, 2002) or specific areas of impact or value, such as: criminal justice (Hughes, 2005); regeneration (Evans and Shaw, 2004); health (Daykin *et al.*, 2008; Staricoff, 2004; Angus, 2002); education (Newman *et al.*, 2010; Standley, 2008); satisfaction and wellbeing (Leadbetter and O'Connor, 2013) and inclusion (Jermyn, 2001).

These reviews have all been undertaken for specific reasons, audiences, and purposes. While the majority are extensive and thorough there are few that have adopted a comprehensive, systematic and consistent analysis of the existing research. To do so would be difficult, not least because the object of study in the vast majority of this research is not always clearly defined, not least because a variety of methodologies have been employed and the ontological and epistemological decisions that have informed them are often opaque. As Gray notes, given the range of disciplines from which cultural policy research draws, the difference between them “in terms of how they understand what it is that they are investigating, as well as the differences between them in terms of their preferred methodologies, mean that there are some serious ontological and epistemological concerns with making use of the findings from one discipline in the context of another” (2010, p.226). While it is once again outside the purpose

⁴¹ The Culture and Sport Evidence (CASE) program was set up by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) in 2008, in collaboration with Arts Council England, English Heritage, the Museums, Libraries and Archives Council and Sport England.

or scope of the current discussion to consider the content of these reviews in close detail, given the extent to which the claims they summarise are reproduced on the other discursive planes where the problem construction is in evidence, it is worthwhile to summarise some of the common assertions that are made in such research, to point to some of the empirical research that relates to these claims, and to consider the critiques that have been made about them.

One of the dominant discourses of value is economic in nature, and arguments around the economic impact of culture are well rehearsed and often promoted as one of the most rigorous methods by which the arts and culture can 'make its case' (Bakhshi *et al.*, 2009). Most commonly it is asserted that the cultural sector is a significant contributor to GDP⁴² and that public money spent on culture returns a host of direct and indirect economic benefits. Such arguments are most often associated with the work of John Myerscough (1988) and his use of multipliers in producing an economic impact assessment, however other methods including contingent valuation (Stevenson, 2013a; Jura Consultants, 2005;) and social return on investment (BOP Consulting, 2011) have also been employed. More specifically, cultural organisations, activities and events have been argued to have direct and indirect economic impacts both locally and nationally (Saayman and Saayman, 2006; Herrero, 2006), and to specifically stimulate economic development (Richards, 2000). Furthermore, cultural 'districts', 'sectors' or 'quarters' have also been argued to boost property values, incomes, employment, and turnover (Noonan, 2013; Stern and Seifert, 2010; Florida, 2002). Irrespective of the claims made, the figures reached almost always rely, either directly or indirectly, upon the cultural participation of individuals in order to generate the economic return⁴³.

⁴² Gross Domestic Product

⁴³ With regards to economic impacts it is often the case that the participation of tourists is as, or even more important than that of locals.

With regards to social impacts (see Belfiore and Bennett, 2010 for a historical discussion of the claims made about the social impacts of the arts) a broad spectrum of claims have been made about the benefits of cultural participation. These include:

- positive associations with higher wellbeing to a degree equivalent to a £1,084 annual pay rise (Fujiwara *et al.*, 2014a);
- positive associations with health, education, employment and economic productivity and civic participation (Fujiwara *et al.*, 2014b, 2015);
- supporting the development of new knowledge (Smithrim and Uptis, 2005);
- supporting the development of new skills (Ludke *et al.*, 2014; University of Leicester, 2002;);
- improved employability (Goodlad *et al.*, 2002);
- offering a new perspective on the world (Walmsley, 2013a);
- increasing self-confidence (Goodlad *et al.*, 2002; Matarasso, 1997)
- increasing empathy (Bal and Veltkamp, 2013);
- engendering an enhanced sense of pride in one's own identity (Bailey, 2005) or even the adoption of a new identity (Lawson, 2009);
- creating or strengthen social networks (Matarasso, 1997);
- improving community development through regeneration (Kay, 2000);
- increasing empowerment and pride (Sjollema and Hanley, 2014);
- assisting in social cohesion (Lee, 2013) through a positive impact on civil society (Leroux and Bernadska, 2014);
- contributing towards the integration of ethnic minority communities (Field and Harrow, 2001);
- reducing mortality rates by displacing other behaviours and activities that are damaging to health (Vaananen *et al.*, 2009).

Specifically in relation to young people and education, cultural participation is proposed to:

- improve wellbeing (Connolly *et al.*, 2011; Hampshire and Matthijsse, 2010);
- reduce the likelihood of truancy and bad behaviour (Lobo and Winsler, 2006);
- improve educational performance (Kendall *et al.*, 2008; Fleming *et al.*, 2004);
- improve IQ (Goulding, 2013a; Schellenberg, 2004);
- increase confidence, self-esteem and self-efficacy (Martin *et al.*, 2013; Catterall and Peppler, 2007; Costa-Giomi, 2004);
- provide a greater understanding of diversity (Benediktsson, 2012);
- support the development of transferable skills for negotiating the contemporary social (Catterall, 2007) and economic landscape (Lobo and Winsler, 2006; Hughes and Wilson, 2004)⁴⁴.

For other potentially vulnerable groups such as the elderly, disabled, or long term sick, cultural participation is argued to result in a number of positive outcomes including

- reducing dependency on clinicians (Crone *et al.*, 2012);
- reducing isolation and enhancing quality of life (Goulding, 2013b);
- improving wellbeing (Reynolds, 2009);

Finally, for those who have been involved in crime, cultural participation is argued to reduce reoffending rates, while also being shown to have a positive impact upon the propensity of those likely to be drawn into criminal behaviour (Miles, 2004; The Unit for the Arts and Offenders, 2003). Again, all of the assertions above require an individual to be participating in culture in order to gain the proposed benefit as a direct result of what is implicitly suggested to be a unique form of practice.

⁴⁴ Many of these impacts being considered are in particular relation to 'at risk' young people (Respress and Lutfi, 2006; Wright *et al.*, 2006).

The findings of ACE's arts debate suggest that with regards to the public perception of the value of the cultural participation, it is aligned with much of what has been asserted above. They identified three core strands of value that cultural participation was believed to afford:

- **Part of a fundamental capacity for life** – helping people to understand, interpret and adapt to the world around them. Part of the construction of one's own identity and the manner in which it is conveyed. Offers a perspective on others identities and ways of living which in turns broadens horizons and challenges assumptions.
- **Enrichment of the experience of life** – bringing colour, beauty, passion and intensity to life. An important source of pleasure, entertainment and relaxation that can lift someone out of the everyday tedium of working life.
- **Potential for powerful applications** - what has otherwise been deemed as instrumental effects. Contribution to economic and social improvement across various areas for both individuals and communities (Bunting, 2007, p.14)

While for some of the participants in this research there was clearly a fundamental connection between each of these areas of value, different groups did tend to emphasise specific areas. Those who felt they had little involvement with the arts acknowledged that the experience was clearly valuable for others, while those with some degree of involvement tended to stress enjoyment, enrichment and escape. Arts professionals tended to focus on its value as a fundamental capacity for life (which the public came to agree with through deliberation) and its capacity for application in other areas, particularly education and community development. This was not the only point at which there was distinction between the value structure of the public and the value structure of what was described as the arts community. While all agreed that quality was a critical factor, differences were evident with regards to how

quality was understood⁴⁵ and how such questions of quality related to the value of the participation that occurred.

2.2.4 Contesting the knowledge claims about the value of cultural participation

The evidence upon which the impact and value of cultural participation is based has been contested. In regards economic impact, Griffiths (1993) has questioned the extent to which culture affects decisions made by business leaders, while both Booth and Boyle (1993) and McGuigan (1996) have critiqued the assertions made about the economic impact of cultural participation policies. In particular there has been a focus on the methodologies employed for the impact studies on which these claims depend. Only one year after Myerscough's seminal study, economist Gordon Hughes challenged his results (Belfiore, 2002), while the suggestion that a multiplier effect (central to many economic impact claims) can be confidently identified and tracked has also been refuted (Baily, Miles and Stark, 2004; Griffiths, 1993).

In terms of social impact, although Eleonora Belfiore (Belfiore and Bennett, 2010; Belfiore, 2009; Belfiore and Bennett, 2007a; Belfiore, 2002) has been one of the most prolific in this regard, there are a number of others who have also challenged the claims made (Oakley, 2004; Merli, 2002; Winner and Cooper, 2000; Van Puffelen, 1996; Hansen, 1995; Hughes, 1989). Galloway (2009) summarises these critiques as being about the failure to provide generalizability, explanatory failings that overstate the scale of impact or fail to explain how the proposed impact occurs, and a failure to take account of the complexity of the contexts in which cultural activities take place⁴⁶. Likewise, DiMaggio (2002) suggests (although has not empirically explored) that the discourses surrounding the value of cultural participation rely upon generalised assumptions of a homogenous and predictable cause and effect. He identifies

⁴⁵ For the public, quality of experience was of most importance, for arts professionals it was quality of product, while for wider stakeholders it was quality of project.

⁴⁶ The importance of context as a determinant of impact has been considered by Hargreaves *et al* (2005) and Brown & Novak-Leonard (2007) who describe it as readiness to receive.

three fallacies that he claims are embedded in the discourses about the benign impacts of cultural participation, and which are often overlooked for the sake of a more advocacy friendly claim:

- **The fallacy of homogeneity of ‘treatment’** – cultural participation is spoken about as though the activities are indivisible and that as such exposure to any suitable object counts as a single ‘treatment’. In reality there is a heterogeneous range of potential activities and there is no reason to assume they will afford similar impacts. The danger is that in statistically pooling these various creative or artistic inputs the real effects will be diluted.
- **The fallacy of homogeneity of ‘effects’** – even when clearly defined, cultural participation is spoken about as though it has undifferentiated effects (whatever that may be) on those participating. This fails to consider that the effects are due to a multiplicity of individual interactions and may very well be path dependent for each individual.
- **The fallacy of linearity of ‘effects’** - the presumption that any ‘effects’ of cultural participation are invariant to scale and the relationship to outcome is linear in form. Adding more of the same inputs may not result in a proportionately commensurate increase in the outcomes (DiMaggio, 2002, cited in Mccarthy *et al.* 2005)

Indeed many of the studies that claim to evidence the value of cultural participation, along with the literature reviews that seek to summarise their findings, have themselves acknowledged their limitations. They will often state that at best the research has identified links, associations and correlations rather than any sort of direct causality. For example, in their recent statistical analysis of the Scottish Household Survey data, the researchers state that while “overall participation in culture and sport, and participation in certain individual cultural activities, is associated with good self-assessed health and high life satisfaction [the study] cannot determine causal relationships” (Leadbetter and O’Connor, 2013, p.32). Furthermore, it is acknowledged that

should causality be present, its direction of travel is uncertain (Renton *et al.*, 2012). In addition, even the most statistically robust research is still only a cross-sectional study given that, there is little to no substantial longitudinal evidence upon which to draw and minimal understanding of how cultural participation leads to the impacts with which they are associated (Allin, 2015; Galloway, 2009; Miles, 2004)⁴⁷. Yet even where such limitations are acknowledged, it is not uncommon for definite and firm assertions to be made about cultural value irrespective of their existence. For example, a recent review of cultural participation research and policy across Europe stated that “despite the underlying difficulty in determining the exact remit of the term ‘culture’, **there is no denying** that it has an inclusive role” (EDUCULT, 2015, p. 89, emphasis added).

There is also little analysis done that considers the independent associations identified with regards to the level of specific cultural practice in order to consider if the correlation is stronger in some cases than in others. This means, for example, that in the study by Renton *et.al.* (2012) attendance at a nightclub is included as a cultural participation activity. Therefore, on the basis of their conclusions, attendance at a nightclub is likely to associate with positive health choices, despite the potential that staying up late listening to very loud music might be considered by some as a poor health choice when the activity is understood from within an alternative discourse. Furthermore, and as is acknowledged by Ruiz (2004), there has been little consideration or measurement of the relative impact of cultural participation comparative to other types of activity. For example there has been no study that has considered if participation in culture has a greater or different impact on the social networks in a community than participation in sports or if cultural participation is more likely to increase a young person’s confidence than learning how to cook or volunteering. While Belfiore and Bennett (2007a) question if, given the

⁴⁷ As Galloway (2009) points out however, it is not only the evidence base for the arts that suffers from these accusations and she offers a brief literature review of the critiques that have been levelled at the evidence base for other areas of policy.

complexity of the experience, it is possible to develop any sort of methodology that might offer the potential for meaningful generalisations, Galloway (2009) suggests that a theory-based process of evaluation may prove beneficial, albeit that it would be reliant upon an on-going process of culmination in which single mechanisms were tested in a range of contexts. To fully implement such an approach would require control groups to be simultaneously considered (White, 2009), something that research into the impacts of cultural participation has thus far failed to employ.

In addition to the critiques of the evidence base, Belfiore and Bennett (2010) also identify the intellectual narrative that considers the negative value that art may have as one that has been suppressed in the contemporary cultural policy discourses about cultural participation. In this regard, it is interesting to note that in her review of the evidence base for culture, the arts and sports, Ruiz (2004) notes that in relation to sports there can be negative as well as beneficial social costs. She cites noise pollution, overcrowding, underused facilities and reductions in local authority funding for other public services as being potential negative impacts (see also Matheson and Finkel, 2013 for a discussion about mega events in sport and sex trafficking). Yet the same is not noted for cultural participation, indeed no research that considers any negative impacts of culture and the arts are considered in the literature reviews that have been produced to inform policy making and comparatively little contemporary research work appears to have been done (see Tepper, 2011 for a study into protests over art and culture in America; Toronyi-Lalic, 2012 for a critique of Public Art in the UK; and Baker, 2014 for a critique of the Sistema music programme). This asymmetry in the research contributes towards the dominant discourses about cultural participation being wholly positive, something that historically has not always been the case (Belfiore and Bennett, 2010).

2.3 Measuring cultural participation

Despite all of the definitional difficulties outlined above, cultural participation is accepted as something that can, and should, be measured and monitored at a

local, national and international level. Comparing who participates with what, when, and how often, has been the primary aim of a significant body of work, the findings of which are central to construction of the problem under analysis. As such, the next section of this chapter considers the research that has been done to monitor and measure cultural participation, and in so doing affirms the existence of a problem as an object of knowledge about which truths can be claimed.

2.3.1 Cultural participation surveys

The majority of research into patterns of cultural participation is empirical, descriptive and survey driven. There are three primary sources from which this sort of data is generated: national and regional representative sample surveys; arts organisations (either through commissioning studies to inform them about their market and audience or administrative data that is increasingly collected about attendees and members; and academic studies (although these are often secondary analysis of existing data or attempts at aggregation). However, the largest body of quantitative data comes from the extensive number of national and/or regional level studies that have been undertaken by various countries, some of which now provide a time series of data stretching back over a number of decades. As Schuster has noted:

...the National Endowment for the Arts in the United States has now overseen five Surveys of Public Participation in the Arts (SPPA) (conducted in 1982, 1985, 1992, 1997, and 2002); the research division of the French Ministry of Culture has overseen four on the Pratiques Culturelles des Français (1973, 1981, 1989, and 1997) and INSEE, the French national statistics office has added one (2003); the Canadian province of Quebec has conducted at least six (1979, 1984, 1989, 1994, 1999, and 2004) and Spain at least five (1980, 1985, 1991, 1998, 2003); Denmark has conducted nine (1964, 1975, 1987, 1993, 1998, and 2004 for adults, and 1987, 1993, and 1998 for children); and Italy and the

Netherlands, among others, have similar traditions of participation studies conducted on a regular basis (Schuster, 2007, p.35).

Since the 1980's, in the UK, the Target Group Index (TGI) has (amongst many other things) collected information on attendance at certain types of activity. However both the range of activities captured and accompanying demographic data is limited. In order to address these shortcomings, since 2005 in England, the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) in partnership with Arts Council England (ACE), Sport England and English Heritage has undertaken the yearly *Taking Part* survey (see Keaney, 2008 for a discussion of *Taking Part* and its relative merits), a survey that has been argued to be the best in the UK for clarity and analysis (Davies, 2007). Likewise in Scotland, participation with culture had been studied through the *Taking Part in Scotland* survey that was conducted in 2004, 2006 and 2008. This built upon prior surveys that the Scottish Arts Council (SAC) had undertaken in 1991, 1994, 1998 and 2001. Although this survey is no longer conducted, cultural participation is still measured through the Scottish Household Survey with an additional "Culture and Sport Module" having been undertaken in 2007/08 in order to provide a broader range of data that would be compatible with the English *Taking Part* survey (see McCall & Playford 2012 for a discussion of the SHS and its relative merits). In addition, other quantitative data sets do exist. They include those conducted since 1993 by the Arts Council of Wales as part of the broader *Omnibus Survey*; a portion of the Northern Ireland Executive's Continuous household survey; and the Arts Council of Northern Ireland's General Population Survey that has reported on rates of participation with art and culture, biennially since 2004.

2.3.2 Patterns of cultural participation

Many studies have also attempted to go beyond the simply descriptive statistic in order to investigate patterns of cultural participation through consideration of inferential relationships, the work by Baumol and Bowen (1966) and Throsby and Withers (1979) might be seen as seminal in this regard. Research of this

type has been conducted both through original primary research and secondary analysis of the type of data sets outlined above. While various methodologies could be employed, the existing research would suggest that some form of multivariate statistical analysis, and in particular binary regression, are seen to be the most appropriate and informative. Examples of these types of analyses have been undertaken in a number of countries e.g. Switzerland (Abbe-Decarroux and Grin, 1992), France (Levy-Garboua and Montmarquette, 1996), Japan (Katsuura, 2008), USA (O'Hagan, 1996; Gray, 1998), Spain (Prieto-Rodríguez and Fernández-Blanco, 2000), Scotland (Leadbetter and O'Connor, 2013), and England (Grisolía *et al.*, 2010; Chan and Goldthorpe, 2005, 2007)⁴⁸. While it is not within the scope of this chapter to undertake a detailed comparison of the results of these various studies, it is worth noting that their findings have tended to exhibit clear similarities:

- Broadly, a significant majority in every survey are classified as participating with art and/or culture;
- In general, people are more likely to attend an event or activity than participate in a more active manner, although this can vary quite widely depending on how activities have been classified in the survey;
- With regards to attendance, films; heritage sites; museums; plays (especially musicals); and live music concerts (especially rock and pop) are the most commonly cited;
- Aside from television, radio and reading⁴⁹; textile crafts; playing a musical instrument; and painting or drawing are the most common types of activity that individuals appear to undertake;
- Participation with culture via the Internet is seeing a significant upward trajectory;
- Women tend to show a slightly higher likelihood of both attendance and active participation than men;

⁴⁸ For a general survey of this field of study see Seaman (2006).

⁴⁹ These are some of the most often contentious activities with regards to how they are classified and in the case of television and radio, if they are included at all.

- Participation rates tend to be highest amongst the youngest (16-24) and lowest amongst those aged seventy-five and over;
- Being married is a negative indicator for all attendance other than comedy, while although having children under five is likely to mean individuals participate at a lower than average rate, once the children are over twelve they are an indicator of higher attendance patterns, especially at the movies;
- Respondents identifying themselves as white exhibit higher rates of participation than those identifying themselves as part of a BME group;
- The higher the income, the more likely someone is to both participate and attend; likewise for their level of education;
- Those living with a disability or long-term illness were less likely to participate in any way, likewise for those living in areas that have been identified as being deprived⁵⁰.
- Respondents would generally like to do more, however lack of time is consistently cited as a factor in this regard⁵¹.

However there are studies that have shown if you broaden what is understood as cultural participation, or allow respondents to self-define the term, then people are shown to be participating in culture at much higher rates across all demographics (Public Perspectives & Middlesex University, 2015; Direction, 2014; Walker and Scott-Melnyk, 2002). Yet despite this, and as shall be discussed in more detail below, findings such as those outlined above are taken as evidence that a problem of non-participation exists. The apparent assumption is that patterns of cultural participation should be far more standardized than they currently appear to be and that the reason for such differences needs to be explained and addressed.

⁵⁰ See Parkinson *et al.*, 2014 and O'Brien and Oakley, 2015 for a full a review of the literature regarding equality and diversity in the arts.

⁵¹ The findings summarised above are typical of what is presented as part of high-level executive summaries in the research literature that exists in relation to this topic (for some examples see: Scottish Government, 2009; DCMS, 2010; Charlton *et al.*, 2010; Leadbetter and O'Connor, 2013; Parkinson *et al.*, 2014).

2.3.3 Critiques of the measurement tool

Studies such as those outlined above are not without their critics and the quality and value of the statistics gathered has been questioned (Selwood, 2002; Madden, 2004, 2005b, 2005a). Schuster (2007) in particular has offered an extensive and detailed discussion as to the methodological difficulties of measuring cultural participation. He specifically highlights the challenges faced in attempting to compare cultural participation across international borders – something he argues that governments in many countries now find hard to resist despite the studies they are using having never been designed to allow for meaningful comparison. While acknowledging that a majority of studies share as their dependant variable an individual's participation rate over a retrospective period of time, he suggests that the “certain crispness and precision” with which the studies are presented “belies the difficulties and compromises entailed in their creation” (2007, p.121) and brings into question their status as objective evidence. He highlights a range of other challenges including: difficulties related to the population surveyed (age range and sample size may vary extensively), and issues related to the frequency of survey (the time of year and period over which participation is measured all affect the participation rates identified).

While critiques such as Schuster's primarily question the validity and reliability of the data produced, others have highlighted their shortcomings for policy makers (Keaney, 2008; Brown, 2006; Selwood, 2002). In particular it is highlighted that there is very little detail provided that would allow a satisfactory disaggregation to be conducted that would highlight the level of cultural participation reliant on government subsidy and the degree to which policy interventions make any tangible difference to overall cultural participation patterns over and above that which one would expect to find in any market⁵². However what all of these critiques appear to share is an

⁵² Likewise Brook (2013) argues that for arts organisations seeking to understand their audiences that aggregated box office data is of far greater value than national studies such as these.

assumption that whilst the tool may be flawed, cultural participation is something that can and needs to be measured and which the representatives of the state have a legitimate right to be monitoring.

2.4 Constructing explanations of contingent social relations

For all that there may be significant contestation about how best to define it and the value that it offers to those who are doing it, all of the research discussed above contributes towards the construction of cultural participation as a specific mode of human practice that affords the potential for both the participant and society to accrue unique value. In so doing it also brings into being the possibility of two distinct identities – those who do participate and those that don't – and the need to explain the patterns of cultural participation associated with each of them. This chapter now moves on to consider the different assertions that have been made about these contingent social relations, what Howarth (2010) describes as the political logic of the discourse. It begins by considering the dominant logics employed in the construction of non-participation as a problem, namely the presence of barriers, and in particular the presence of psychological barriers that are understood as an indicator of social stratification and inequality.

2.4.1 Explaining differences in cultural participation in terms of barriers

As shall become clear in the chapters that follow, one of the keywords in the construction of non-participation as a problem is that of 'barriers'⁵³ and in the discourses of cultural policy it is employed as the dominant explanation of why such variable patterns of cultural participation exist. It is a logic that has been constructed on the plane of research, where barriers have been both defined as an object with agency and recommendations provided on how their agency might be overcome. Such research has primarily employed quantitative surveys in which the closed response answers have tended to focus on personal circumstances, the external environment and to some extent intra-personal

⁵³ The concept of barriers is not unique to cultural participation research and as such is also reproduced in other disciplines (see, for example, Hendry & Polson 2007; Flanagan & Hancock 2010; Boag-Munroe & Evangelou 2012).

factors (Department for Culture Media and Sport, 2015a; Public Perspectives & Middlesex University, 2015; Creative Scotland, 2014a; Scottish Government, 2009). However some limited qualitative research has also been conducted that tends to adopt semi-structured interviews or focus groups to probe more deeply into the intra and inter-personal factors that may act as barriers (Public Perspectives & Middlesex University, 2015; Kraaykamp *et al.*, 2008; Creative Research, 2007; Morris Hargreaves McIntyre, 2005; Baker and Maitland, 2002). Nevertheless, in both quantitative and qualitative approaches, the findings are all based on what the respondents state barriers to be rather than any observed evidence of how such choices are made in practice. This leads to the possibility that in their responses, respondents are simply employing the logic of the discourse that makes it possible to ask about barriers in the first place, and that as such it should be understood as a self-reproducing truth.

Charlton *et. al.* (2010) have conducted a summary of the quantitative research and found the most common barriers that are regularly cited in this type of research to be⁵⁴:

High costs	Health/Disability	Lack of time
Disability	Transport problems	No nearby venue
Poor state or accessibility of venues	Fear of going out alone	Too boring
Too difficult	Never occurred to me	It's not for me
Never occurred to me	Not interested	No need

Table 3: Barriers to participation: Summary of the findings of Charlton *et. al.* (2010)

This broadly aligns with the more condensed taxonomy identified in the survey work of Biggins *et. al.* (2012) who identify the existence of eight possible categories of barriers:

- Emotional barriers
- Isolation due to geography and finances
- Health problems
- No perceived barriers
- No motivation or interest

⁵⁴ Charlton *et. al.* were reviewing the literature in relation to both participation with culture and sport. The barriers they identified specifically related to sport have been left out of this table.

- Uniformed
- Time conscious
- Miscellaneous reasons

Lack of money and/or time are the two most commonly cited factors that individuals state act as a barrier to cultural participation (Department for Culture Media and Sport, 2015a; ResearchBods, 2014; Biggins *et al.*, 2012; Scottish Government, 2009). However, citing the evidence from *The Arts Debate* (Creative Research, 2007; Bunting, 2007) Keaney (2008) highlights that while it may be time and money that are often initially pointed to, upon further discussion it appears that the primary factor is lack of motivation or interest. The study of Biggins *et al.* (2012) into individuals' interests for specific types of cultural activities also supports this position in finding that, at the upper end, around 50% of respondents stated they had an interest in theatre and film, while at the lower end only 10% of respondents stated an interest in contemporary dance and electronic arts. These findings point to the possibility that in almost all cases, when considered at the level of specific genres of activity, the majority have no interest in participating with them.

However, Keaney (2008) goes on to propose that this lack of interest is itself a result of complex psychological barriers that are a combination of inter and intra personal factors. This assertion is shared by the recent study into the cultural participation of young Londoners that found the stated barriers of their respondents to be like an iceberg, where initial rationale responses were seen to mask underlying emotions and questions of identity (Acacia Avenue, 2013). It is an argument that is also employed by Bunting *et al.* (2008) who draws a distinction between practical and psychological barriers, arguing that it is the latter that is of greatest consequence in affecting someone's patterns of cultural participation. The phrase 'not for the likes of me' is often pointed to in the research as evidence of the existence of such psychological barriers⁵⁵, and as

⁵⁵ ACE ran an audience development research program in 2003 called *Not for the Likes of You* (Morton Smyth Limited, 2004) while the SHS specifically asked if respondents believed that "Culture and the Arts were not for people like me" (Scottish Government, 2015e).

shall now be discussed this is indicative of the degree to which the theories of Bourdieu - although rarely cited directly in the primarily grey literature about barriers to participation – are a core component of the discursive logics of the problem construction. As shall be outlined, these logics represent differing patterns of cultural participation as an indicator of social stratification and structural inequality.

2.4.2 Explaining differences in cultural participation in terms of social stratification

In summarising the sociological literature on cultural participation, Chan and Goldthorpe (2007, 2005) identify the homology argument as one of dominant ways in which differing patterns of cultural participation are understood. They associate this argument with those theories that see social stratification (structures of inequality) and cultural stratification as being closely mapped (See Bennett & Savage 2004; Bennett & Silva 2006 and the articles of the special editions that these papers introduce for a discussion of this connection). The early work of DiMaggio (1987) is a relevant example in this case, although he does acknowledge that stereotypes of cultural participation are more rigidly demarcated than the actual patterns of participation in contemporary society. This line of argument focuses on the claim that those in higher socio-economic strata predominantly consume what is labelled as highbrow culture while those individuals lower down the socio-economic hierarchy prefer practice that is described as popular or mass culture.

Bourdieu's work (1986 [1979]) is one of the most prominent examples of the homology argument, proposing that processes of distinction and aesthetic distancing are actively employed by the dominant classes in order to demonstrate, confirm and sustain their superiority. Bourdieu's work directly linked differing patterns of cultural participation with issues of class. Where class had, up to that point, primarily been considered in terms of economic standing or Weberian notions of status, Bourdieu's work brought other factors to bear including taste, social networks and patterns of symbolic performativity.

This led to his influential assertion that there were multiple forms of capital that could be employed for social advantage - economic, social, symbolic, and cultural – not solely economic capital as had been the dominant argument previously.

For Bourdieu⁵⁶, cultural capital broadly referred to the education, taste and learning that was instilled in someone from an early age – part of their habitus. Specifically, he proposes three subtypes of cultural capital:

- **Embodied** – the properties of oneself that are either consciously acquired or inherited over time through socialisation and which shape an individual's taste, values and way of thinking;
- **Objectified** – physical objects that are owned and which (by virtue of symbolic capital) convey the cultural capital of the individual that owns them;
- **Institutionalised** – recognition by an institution of learning or knowledge expressed through some form of measurement (e.g. a degree award). It eases the transference of cultural capital to economic capital through creating a proxy for cultural capital that can be compared with others and more readily exchanged in a market.

However it is important to consider all three types of cultural capital in tandem with symbolic capital – a concept that he expanded on in later work (Bourdieu, 1998). Symbolic capital was understood as the result of a process by which certain agents within a particular field are able to locate certain manifestations

⁵⁶ Cultural capital has also been understood in more strictly economic terms, for example Throsby (1999) has also posited an understanding of cultural capital in which it is defined as an asset that in addition to any economic value it may possess, also embodies, stores or gives rise to cultural value. Furthermore, Florida in his creative class thesis, employed the term creative capital in relation to an individual's accumulated capacity to innovate and create meaningful new forms in a manner that contributes towards economic growth for the area in which they reside (2002, 2003). Although the extent to which creative capital can be said to differ from human capital has been questioned (Glaeser, 2005; Fritsch and Stuetzer, 2009).

of cultural capital within wider social classificatory structures thus bestowing them with a greater or lesser degree of exchange value. As May describes, symbolic capital is:

The power to confer meanings upon social reality whilst providing for a social recognition of one's place within social relations [...] Within a capitalist society, the very accumulation of symbolic capital may actually depend upon its 'distance' from economic necessity (1996, p.126)

The choice to undertake certain activities is, in this understanding, partially driven by a desire (conscious or otherwise) to accrue symbolic capital and maintain - or alter - one's place within the stratification of society that is marked out by a web of symbolic boundaries. Symbolic boundaries are understood as creating groups of people or things to which a system of rules can be applied and a structural hierarchy established with regards to the relation of each group to another. They therefore have the potential to produce and sustain inequality through their capacity to function as a "medium through which individuals acquire status, monopolise resources, ward off threats, or legitimate their social advantages, often in reference to a superior lifestyle, habits, character, or competencies" (Lamont, 1992, pp.11-12).

While it had traditionally been argued that such symbolic boundaries maintained an elite-to-mass hierarchy with regards to differing types of cultural participation and the cultural capital that an affinity with it would afford, Richard Peterson's work on omnivorousness in relation to the consumption of music (Peterson and Kern, 1996; Peterson and Simkus, 1992; Peterson, 1992) has led to an argument that this has been replaced with an omnivore-to-univore hierarchy that Peterson visualised as an inverted pyramid. Peterson observed that individuals with higher social status were not adverse to popular culture and were in fact adding an increasing diversity of cultural forms to their repertoire at an increasing rate (Peterson, 1992).

This strand of the sociological research into cultural participation has become increasingly influential and has seen a growing amount of work produced over the past decade in which it has been both critiqued and employed (see Peterson 2005 for an overview of the literature in addition to: Friedman 2012; Savage & Gayo 2011; Warde & Gayo-Cal 2009; Sullivan & Katz-Gerro 2007; Warde *et al.* 2007; Vander Stichele & Laermans 2006). While there are those that have seen the emergence of the omnivore as a representative expression of a more liberal and democratic society (Peterson and Kern, 1996; Bryson, 1996), there are others that propose more instrumental reasons. Van Eijck, for example, argues that qualities associated with omnivorousness are “important resources in a society that requires social and geographic mobility, ‘employability’ and social networking from its highly skilled worked” (van Eijck 2002 cited in Ollivier, 2008, p.125). Furthermore, as it has been increasingly adopted as a concept, its meaning has become concomitantly less distinct, although two primary understandings appear to be in use: the volume and compositional definitions (Warde *et al.*, 2007). While the former has been suggested to have become the most common operational definition (Warde *et al.*, 2007; Peterson, 2005) it is the latter that was of central concern to the original concept.

Peterson’s original argument was that the aesthetics of elite status was “being redefined as the appreciation of all distinctive leisure activities and creative forms along with the appreciation of the classic fine arts” (Peterson and Simkus, 1992, p.252). While a rejection of snobbishness and an inclusive tolerance were central components of this concept, it was not intended to imply an absolute indifference to distinctions. Instead it was conceived as a new form of distinction among the privileged “where wide knowledge and capacity for the appreciation of many practices and products was itself accorded symbolic honour, and that a section of the most privileged part of the population found in it a new source of reputation and status” (Warde *et al.*, 2007, p.146).

However the work of Warde *et al.* (2007) also challenges the notion of a unitary and singularly distinctive form of omnivorous engagement. Combining quantitative and qualitative research they identify four types of omnivore: the professional; the dissident; the apprentice; and the unassuming⁵⁷. Given that there appears to be multiple varieties of omnivorousness (and thus is arguably a rather culturally undistinguished practice) questions arise as to the extent to “whether each type confers practical or symbolic advantage in equal measure” (Warde *et al.*, 2007, p.161). Ollivier (2008) attempts to answer this to some degree by focusing on the different ways in which openness to diversity of cultural practice is expressed by different types of cultural omnivore. Identifying four modes of openness - humanist, populist, practical and indifferent – she argues that each expresses a specific form of agency and that it is these distinct forms of individual agency that are hierarchized within society, replacing previous class based structures. She argues that while modern society may bestow the potential for agency to all, there remain competing conceptions of how best this agency should be employed:

What is most highly regarded, at least by many intellectuals and scholars, is **willingness** and **ability to choose**, expressed in relation to **valued cultural domains**. As argued by Snibbe and Markus (2006) and Skeggs (2004), this form of agency is both recognised as desirable by, and most easily accessible to, individuals who are positioned as central in any given field and who possess not only large amounts, but also the right kind, of material and symbolic resources (Ollivier, 2008, p.144 original emphasis)

⁵⁷ While they are not the first to do this (see, for example Emmison, 2003; Zavisca, 2005), their study is of note not only because of the robust methodology employed, but also because of two specific points they raise. Not least, they draw a distinction between the particular orientations with which the different types of omnivore approach their cultural participation. While the professional and dissident approach their cultural activities in a critically aesthetic manner - the “disinterested” interaction - neither of the other two types appeared affected by concerns over aesthetic qualities.

In this regard the societal distinction is not about what one participates in, but rather how one approaches it. As Bennett *et. al.* claim: “arguably it is less the selection of cultural content (as with legitimate cultural items) and more the orientation towards cultural consumption that delineates class divisions in the UK” (2009, p.254). Or as Holden (2010) argues, cultural capital no longer resides in a cultural canon, but is instead contained within the cultural capacity that one exhibits. The resultant outcome being that some individuals (rather than classes⁵⁸) are more highly valued than others based on the degree to which their mode of openness points towards a form of agency that is perceived as desirable. In particular, Ollivier argues that it is cosmopolitanism as conceived by Hannerz (1990) that is most prized “in societies organized around knowledge, networking, flexibility and mobility” (2008, p.142).

2.4.3 Cultural capital as a problem to be addressed: from theory to practice

Based on the political logics outlined above, one of the dominant assertions made in the discourses of cultural policy is that non-participation is therefore due to the degree to which an individual has internalised and accepted the symbolic boundaries that have been established by those with the greatest degree of control over the symbolic value of cultural capital. This cultural capital, often seen as being manifest in unspoken questions of etiquette, is seen to act as invisible barriers for certain individuals to certain organisations and activities. As such, it is on this basis that claims are made about the need for action to be taken in order to support individuals in acting against such symbolic boundaries (Acacia Avenue, 2013; Morton Smyth Limited, 2004; Research Center for Museums and Galleries, 2004) as part of a broader aspiration to engender a more equal society.

However, in relation to cultural policy in France, Dubois (2011) has argued that while Bourdieu’s theory had a predominant impact on the intellectual

⁵⁸ As Oakley and O’Brien (2015) note, there is significant technical debate in the sociological research about cultural consumption. This primarily cleaves between those that focus on Weberian notions of status and those that follow Bourdieu to stress the importance of class.

framework of cultural policy, it had limited effects on its actual orientations and actions – an observation that the work of others in the UK also points towards. For example, in her questioning of the proliferation of terms like cultural, social and human capital, Ruth Levitas (2004) has highlighted what she sees as the slippage by which they are now primarily considered in relation to capitalist production rather than for the insight they provide into how class domination is sustained. As such, she argues that they have become part of the naturalization of capitalism in which all of the attributes and experiences of an individual are perceived as the means to an economic end, an “attribute traded for advantageous position in an allegedly meritocratic system” (2004, p.54). Focusing in particular on cultural capital, she argues that while Bourdieu’s concept was intended to address how the rich create a barrier between themselves and everyone else - social exclusion at Barry’s upper threshold (2002 cited in Levitas, 2004) – it is employed in the discourses of policy in relation to the poor and their inability to integrate into mainstream society (Barry’s lower threshold) in part because of their deficit of cultural capital. The solution is seen to be the provision of opportunities to participate, given that “[i]n a meritocracy, inequality is legitimated by equality of opportunity. Opportunity is [therefore] a key concept in the exposition of social exclusion and its remedies” (Levitas, 2004, p.48).

The deficit model that this perspective gives rise to has been increasingly pointed to as the manner in which cultural participation policies have been conducted (Oakley and O’Brien, 2015; Gilmore, 2013; Miles, 2013; Stevenson, 2013b; Jancovich, 2011). However, as Roberts (2004) notes, the idea that there is some degree of inadequate participation in certain social activities amongst a portion of the population is not new in policy terms and was particularly prominent in education policy throughout the nineteen sixties. Despite it having been discredited by the end of that decade he notes the extent to which the discourse of inclusion has given it new life. This concurs with the arguments of Levitas (2004, 2005) about the degree to which widening participation in higher education has been seen as fundamental in overcoming the weak labour market

positions that increasing numbers of young people find themselves faced with in a service led economy. Cultural capital, in this sense, becomes conflated with formal knowledge imparted in the education system and topped up through attendance at selected cultural organisations, something akin to the idea of cultural literacy advanced by Hirsch (1988). This type of cultural capital is understood as residing in the individual rather than amongst a network and as such the right injection of cultural capital into the individual is assumed to combat inequality through seamless transference to economic capital via the labour market⁵⁹. However Levitas and others have argued that this is a gross misreading of Bourdieu's original theory (Little, 2015; Gilmore, 2013; Pelletier, 2009; Levitas, 2004). Furthermore, even if cultural capital could be imbued in this manner, there are those that reject Bourdieu's core proposition around the intergenerational transmission of capital as the core driver of social reproduction (Goldthorpe, 2007). Stressing instead that while it may play a role it has nowhere near the degree of importance that economic capital ultimately plays with regards to material inequality and which a focus on a redistribution of cultural capital ultimately obscures (Roberts, 2004).

The dominant understanding of cultural capital and its role in promoting equality is further challenged by Roberts who, in addressing leisure pursuits more generally, is unconvinced by the suggestions that participation in certain activities can lead to the acquisition of "socio-cultural assets that are convertible into, or able to expand and transform into economic assets reflected in labour market achievements" (2004, p.57). Finding fault in the findings of a number of studies, he highlights two rarely considered flaws with the assumptions around capital conversion. Firstly, he points to the degrading effect upon their symbolic capital of mainstreaming certain activities to the point that they become commonplace - "what works for a few becomes ineffective when access is widened" (2004, p.68). Secondly he evokes a less discussed component of Bourdieu's observations to highlight the capacity and speed with which

⁵⁹ There are those that argue that the status of capital can only be applied to that which has this potential to be converted into economic capital (Garnham and Williams, 1986).

advantaged groups adopt closure strategies to stem invasion from below and defend the symbolic and cultural premium attached to the activities they choose to take part in. This chimes with the assertion made by DiMaggio and Useem (1978) that all attempts at inclusion are bound to fail, by dint of the fact that one of the key functions of social practice is for one group to differentiate themselves from another. As Kawashima notes: "it is actually one of the functions of culture to legitimise and enhance social inequality" (2006, p.66).

Holden's suggestion that there is a fundamental paradox at the heart of attempts to increase cultural capital sums up these concerns. For while it may be the case that "the possession of cultural capital enhances an individual's social mobility [...] cultural capital is itself predicated on culture as a marker of social difference" (2010, p.37). Roberts also argues that even if the claims made about capital conversion were all accurate, in order for the ultimate egalitarian aim to be achieved the individuals must gain access to the labour market at a level that is impossible given the shape of the occupational basis upon which the economy is based. While acknowledging that "the social and cultural dimensions of stratification should never be neglected" (2004, p.69) he suggests that sociologists should beware becoming complicit in the spin around participation that masks the intransigent economic inequalities about which participation policies have achieved little to nothing. His striking conclusion is that given the amount of time that policies such as these have been adopted and promoted, had they been sound there would no longer be a problem of material inequality to address.

Such a perspective evokes the arguments of Levitas (2004, 2005) who, in relation to social policy more generally, has highlighted the extent to which words like inclusion, participation and engagement have become part of a neoliberal lexicon that has allowed debates about equality to be moved away from a drive towards economic redistribution and equality of outcomes towards the promotion of a meritocracy built upon the notion of equality of opportunity. This critique has many similarities to Rancière's critique (2004) of Bourdieu's

model of distinction and the extent to which it is employed to legitimate inequality. In this regard it is its performativity rather than its methodology with which Rancière takes issue. Reviewing this critique in relation to education, Pelletier argues that in Rancière's terms the role of public education is "to justify inequality whilst promising to perpetually reduce it" (2009, p.9). It is an institution populated by "those who give themselves the authority of reducing the inequality of others with respect to themselves" (2009, p.9). Those who are excluded are seen to be so because, by dint of their habitus, they lack the knowledge (and cultural capital) to fully participate in society rather than a failure of society to hear the knowledge that they have or value their culture as capital. Inclusion becomes the act of increasing the number of people who accept the dominant democratic order and their place within it based on classifications and divisions established by those that can employ the greatest power, and the normativity of which is reinforced by the numerous attempts to break down barriers to social mobility as part of a progressive democracy. This position starts from a perspective in which inequality is assumed inevitable rather than, as Rancière proposes, assuming equality from the outset and to then to systematically seek its verification and affirmation⁶⁰ (for a discussion of Rancière's major work and his particular conception of equality see Davis 2010).

2.5 Alternative explanations about difference in cultural participation patterns

However, the differing patterns of cultural participation evident in surveys such as the SHS have not only been explained in terms of social stratification and inequality. As the research summarised in the final section of this chapter shows they can have also been explained in terms of individual identity, economic factors and personal motivations. From each of these perspectives, variations in

⁶⁰ Of course, as Pelletier (2009) notes, this raises the question of how one might seek to speak of inequality without positioning oneself in relation to those deemed to be at a disadvantage or representing one's own knowledge as the remedy to their situation.

cultural participation would be seen as an inevitable phenomenon rather than an indicator of a social problem requiring state intervention.

2.5.1 Explaining differences in cultural participation as an expression of individual identity

In primarily representing symbolic boundaries as wholly negative, much of the existing research into psychological barriers to cultural participation tends to overlook the extent to which the creation of such symbolic boundaries can also be understood as an important aspect of social life:

Boundary work is ... a way of developing a sense of group membership, it creates bonds based on shared emotions, similar conceptions of the sacred and the profane, and similar reactions towards symbolic violators (Lamont, 1992, pp.11–12)

Given the importance that a lack of interest appears to play in why someone might opt not to participate with a particular type of activity, it is interesting to note that what has been far less explored qualitatively is the extent to which people may be self-excluding from certain practices as a positive option. As Holden states, non-participation is not the same thing as exclusion (2010). Indeed the analysis of Bunting *et. al.* (2008) suggested that even if the physical and psychological barriers were removed or reduced there would still remain a large proportion of the population who would chose not to participate with the type of activities that cultural participation surveys tend to measure. If this is the case it is therefore unclear for whom their resultant non-participation is a problem.

This is indicative of the extent to which Bourdieu's work can be criticised for its failure to acknowledge the fluid manner in which individuals can understand their actions and their capacity to act in a manner outside of the structural expectations of their individual habitus. As May notes: "the potential for human practices to gain autonomy from the operation of power is conceived to be only minimal in [his] formulations" and thus his conception of human behaviour is very "one dimensional" (1996, p.131). This counterpoint to Bourdieu's position

can be found within a strand of sociological literature on cultural participation that Chan and Goldthorpe (2007; 2005) suggest exhibits a belief in the theory of cultural participation as individualisation - and which is particularly evident in the work of Bauman (1988) and Featherstone (1987). This position is associated with an argument that in affluent and commercialised societies such as the UK, the relationship between cultural taste, consumption and social stratification is increasingly losing any clear grounding. Other demographic factors (age, gender, sexuality, ethnicity etc.) are seen to have as much if not more relationship to the choices that are made around participation with cultural activities and it is argued that a capacity to exhibit individual agency and move beyond social conditioning is increasingly in evidence.

It is worth considering Sarah Thornton in relation to this theme of individualisation, in particular her work on subcultural capital (1995, 1997). While her research exploring the club scene of the late eighties and nineties did find evidence of an individualisation narrative in which youth exhibit a desire to assert a “distinctive character and affirm that they are not anonymous members of an undifferentiated mass” (Thornton, 1997, p.201) she argued that they did this through the competing subcultural ideologies of closely associated social groups, each of which exhibited their own forms of [sub]cultural capital. She also noted that subcultures and their systems of power were not the progressive gesture of deviance or dissonance from the hegemonic norm that previous scholars such as Young and Hebdige had imagined. Rather they were micro-systems of discrimination and distinction that obfuscate the dominant structure as they compete in order to replace it with their own. They are dependent upon suggestions of superiority over other subcultures and an assertion of hierarchy within a reimagined social order. As Thornton notes, “[d]istinctions are never just assertions of equal difference, they usually entail some claim to authority and presume the inferiority of others” (1997, p.234). While still reliant on Bourdieu’s theories, Thornton’s work reminds us that they were the product of “[his] own field, within his social world of players with high volumes of institutionalised cultural capital [and that] it is possible to observe

sub-species of capital operating within other [currently] less privileged [fields or] domains” (1997, p.235). It is however interesting to note that despite regular invocations of Bourdieu, researchers explicitly considering cultural participation appear to have made little use of Thornton’s theories and their implication for how patterns of cultural activity are viewed in policy terms. The question of supporting sub-cultural participation is not one that is dominant in the discourses of cultural policy.

And so, as Ollivier notes, surveys on cultural participation “tend to be built from the point of view of legitimate culture⁶¹, and thus to include more items pertaining to high culture than popular culture” (2008, p.125). In so doing they ignore the forms of cultural capital valued by those often labelled as non-participants and leading a number of researchers to suggest that the greatest barrier to cultural participation may be the lack of relevance that much of the publically funded cultural activity has for the majority of the population (Public Perspectives & Middlesex University, 2015; Warwick Commission, 2015; Bunting, 2007). For example, one study found that while those from ethnic minorities were less likely to participate in the arts because they found them too irrelevant and off-putting, these same individuals were actively involved in a range of activity that they did not regard as art but that appeared to afford them the same benefits that are associated with what were described as mainstream arts activities (Jermyn and Desai, 2000). Another piece of research identified that young people in London found the term arts and culture overly narrow and many of the activities that it traditionally encompasses irrelevant to them. They saw their cultural life as being far more expansive, and found it difficult to find one term that encapsulated all it might include, although the term ‘creative activities’ came closest (Acacia Avenue, 2013). Likewise, in exploring public attitudes to creativity, Creative Scotland found that of those who felt they did something creative in their life, three of the top ten responses were activities that would not be captured in the SHS (gardening, cooking for enjoyment and

⁶¹ Given the extent to which his work is drawn on elsewhere in the article, it is presumed that Ollivier is referring to legitimate culture in a Bourdieusian sense here.

baking) (2014a). Despite findings like these, recommendations continue to be made about how to increase ethnic minority or young audiences for subsidised organisations and activities, but far less consideration is given to how the activity that these individuals were participating with might be supported and further encouraged. This is perhaps because what is not even asked, let alone considered in the discussion around barriers to participation, is what individuals are doing with their time and money currently and which they would be required to change in order to participate in culture – indicative of the extent to which economic perspectives about cultural participation also tend to be absent from the research that represents cultural non-participation as a problem.

2.5.2 Explaining differences in cultural participation as the result of economic factors

Traditional economic studies assume individuals to be utility maximising rational individuals who will select their level and form of participation with cultural activities in order to satisfy their needs, subject to any constraints with relation to disposable income and price (Heilbrun and Gray, 1993). These preferences are presumed to be fixed and dependent upon the type of individual characteristics used to identify the sort of correlations outlined above, characteristics that are presumed to exist outside of the model. Price is a primary factor in economic models, where price refers to the full cost of the participation including: admission; transportation; refreshments; and other ancillary expense. However the price of participation is not absolute, but is relative to other substitute activities that would afford the same or similar utility to the individual. Therefore the economic model proposes that the choice to participate in any activity would depend on the relationship between these two prices (Vogel, 2000; Nardone, 1982; Throsby and Withers, 1979) . Felton (1992) has suggested that such opportunity costs – what will be forgone by committing time and resource to participating in the selected activity – tend to have a greater impact at moderate and lower income levels and points to this as a factor in explaining greater levels of cultural participation amongst the most

affluent. Although in certain circumstances they also act to counteract the expected rise in participation that one would expect to see with a rise in income. This is because as disposable income has increased but time is perceived to be increasingly precious, a majority of people are argued to be looking to participate in activities of increasingly high quality and for which there is a limited risk of them not delivering a 'perfect moment'. This leads to a preference for the familiar⁶² and rejection of participation with that which someone has had no past experience of (Henley Centre, 2000).

This is understood as evidence of the extent to which, in making their choice, an individual is believed to consider their personal preference for the activity in question in relation to other goods and services that they could purchase or spend time on as an alternative. Understanding the relative merits of the various choices available is understood to be mediated by the information available to an individual. This means that as the range of substitute activities about which they are knowledgeable expands, participation with existing activities is likely to alter. What is important about this is that within this body of research the potential substitutes for cultural participation are not limited to those activities that can to a greater or lesser extent be associated with the arts. Roberts (2004) stresses the extent to which the division of what the public most commonly understand as leisure time activities into various types of practice (such as cultural participation) result in artificial conceptual creations that are not necessarily what someone experiences in actuality. Removing any distinction between cultural participation and leisure time broadens the range of alternatives in relation to which a decision to participate in any type of activity will be made.

For example, Montgomery and Robinson (2006) found that arts and sports events share similar audiences thus sharing the total attendance time that any

⁶² Although other studies suggest that when it comes to risk in relation to arts attendance, people exist on a spectrum from wholly risk adverse to risk seekers for whom uncertainty is part of the attraction, however the latter is in the minority (McIntyre, 2006).

one person might have. Furthermore, both were in competition from movies as an alternative for either. From this perspective, given that the population appears to have access to a wide range of leisure time pursuits (Department for Culture Media and Sport, 2015b) and presuming that the proportion of time available for leisure does not increase, it could be assumed that to instigate a general increase in activity with regards to one leisure time activity would presumably necessitate a general decrease in another. Furthermore, with regards to any attempt to increase participation with the arts, it is worth noting Putnam's (2000) argument that a perception of reduced leisure time combined with ever greater options and varieties of home-centred leisure options means that traditional arts activities face increasing competition from multiple fronts – especially those arts activities for which constraints intrinsic to the form limit the extent to which individuals can be flexible around how and when their participation takes place (McCarthy *et al.*, 2001). The logics of this discourse therefore place far more emphasis on the need for those seeking participants to effectively communicate to them why they should choose to spend their leisure time participating with their organisations and activities as opposed to any other option that is open to them.

2.5.3 Explaining differences in cultural participation in relation to motivations and needs

The idea that cultural participation is not a distinct type of leisure time activity means that within the economic discourse anyone seeking to alter patterns of participation must first understand the utility or benefit that someone seeks, as the logics of this discourse suggest that everyone has individual goals or motivations that drive behaviour (Bouder and Pailler, 1999). In this regard, a report by the Henley Centre (2000) has suggested there are two ways in which people segment their leisure time - constructive leisure time and chilling leisure time - and that they have different motivations for each. However empirical research highlights the extent to which this simplistic dichotomy can be seen to be somewhat reductionist and that within each of these categories a number of distinct motivations can be argued to exist. Hood, for example, identified six

attributes that she placed along a spectrum of motivation, from the rational to the emotional:

- Being with people
- Doing something worthwhile
- Feeling comfortable and at ease in one's surroundings
- Having a challenge of new experiences
- Having an opportunity to learn
- Participating actively (1983)

Yet even with an expanded list of motivations, little consideration appears to be given to the manner in which they interact. In suggesting that there are four categories of leisure time activity, Kelly (1987; 2000) argues that there are always two primary interrelated dimensions that go into any choice about what someone will do. Firstly, is it entertainment or fulfilment that is sought? Secondly, is the potential for social interaction more important than the activity itself or is the individual more interested in the opportunity to develop their knowledge, understanding, or skill in relation to the activity in question? McCarthy *et. al.* (2001) have attempted to turn these two dimensions into a framework of arts participants (Table 4), although their categories have not been tested empirically:

<i>What persons seeks</i>			
<i>Participation preference</i>		<i>Entertainment</i>	<i>Fulfilment</i>
	<i>Developing proficiency (self-focused)</i>	Participation through the media	Hands-on participation
	<i>Social Experience</i>	Attendance (casual)	Attendance (aficionado)

Table 4: Framework of Arts Participants, by McCarthy et. al (2001)

Marketing and audience development consultants, Morris Hargreaves McIntyre (2006) have also done extensive research into the motivations of participants (primarily in relation to museums and galleries) offering a model in which the relationship between different motivations is considered. However, rather than

a matrix, they present a hierarchy of motivations (Table 5) that owes much to the work of Maslow. Their work draws an explicit relationship between the type of needs that are being met and the degree of engagement a participant is having. It is proposed that the more someone progresses up the hierarchy, the more rewarding and fulfilling their participation is. Here there is a suggestion that while attendance may be an indicator of engagement, it is of engagement at a superficial level and that participants will be most engaged with those activities that are fulfilling what are represented as higher order motivations such as aesthetic pleasure and contemplation.

Visitor need/motivation	Engagement	Perception of museum/gallery	Maslow Hierarchy
Escapism	Spiritual	Church	Self-actualisation
Contemplation			
Stimulate activity			
Aesthetic pleasure	Emotional	Spa	Aesthetic
Awe and wonder			Cognitive and Esteem
Moving			
Personal relevance			
Experience the past			
Nostalgia			
Sense of cultural identity			
Academic interest	Intellectual	Archive	
Hobby interest			
Self-improvement			
Stimulate children			
Social interaction	Social	Attraction	Social
Entertainment			
To see, to do			
Inclusion, welcome			
Access, comfort, warmth, welcome			Safety Physiology

Table 5: Hierarchy of participant motivations, by Morris, Hargreaves & McIntyre (2006)

The focus within the marketing literature on needs fulfilment also leads to a rejection of a simple binary between the cultural participant and non-participant in absolute terms. Instead, anyone's participation status can only be understood in relation to a specific activity or organisation. Models have therefore been proposed that divide the participant and non-participant up into multiple different types based around various factors including their needs, breadth of activity and the degree to which they believe that a specific activity or organisation has the potential to be of value to them. For example, a recent

qualitative study of young Londoners found that there were four types of cultural participant based around a behavioural and attitudinal axis representing repertoire and reward (Fig. 1).

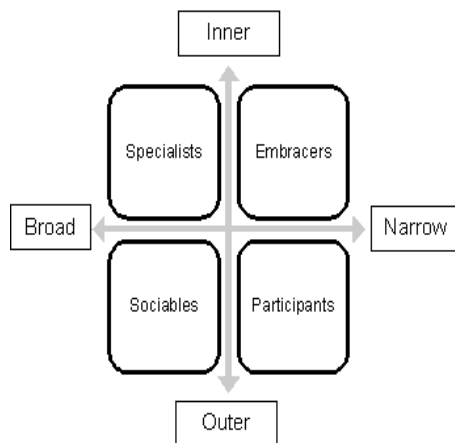


Figure 1: Typology of cultural participants, by Acacia Avenue (2013)

Specialists: *interested in a small number of activities about which they are deeply passionate. Personal motivation to participate*

Embracers: *interested in a broad range of activities and are deeply passionate about arts and culture in general. Personal motivation to participate*

Participators: *take part in a broad range of activities but primarily with others. Are motivated to take part by others and are rewarded by the social interaction first and foremost*

Sociables: *take part in one or two activities because friends do. Motivated by the social aspect and have no particular commitment to the activities they do*

Likewise, with regards to non-participants, consultants Morris Hargreaves McIntyre propose four types⁶³ based on their extensive quantitative studies:

- **Intenders** – They believe their needs will be met but there may be some barriers from allowing them to pursue this;
- **Open to persuasion** – They are not hostile to the idea that their needs could be met, but are a little doubtful and may require some sort of active persuasion and/or mitigation of risk;
- **Resistors** – They are highly sceptical that their needs will be met or that they have needs that could be met by the type of organisation in question. They may have little knowledge of the activity in questions or have had a poor experience in their past;

⁶³ Their study was solely based on attendance at organised activities and as such does not consider those who do not participate in what the quantitative studies distinguish as self-directed cultural activities.

- **Rejectors** - They are actively hostile to any suggestion that the organisation has anything to offer them and see no relationship between their needs and the proposition of the organisation in question (McIntyre, 2006, p.34)

However, while taxonomies such as this one may recognise the importance of external environmental factors, there is little consideration given to their potential impact on the choices made by an individual. The conceptual model of cultural participation offered by Walker & Scott-Melnyk (2002) (Table 6) addresses this in arguing that any cultural participation choices are a result of an interplay between motivations, personal resources and paths of engagement. Their model is adapted from one of civic voluntarism that was developed to explain who participates in politics and why (Verba *et. al.* 1995 in Walker and Scott-Melnyk, 2002, p.14). While interesting to note that needs are not listed as one of the driving motivations, it can be assumed from the accompanying text that needs fulfilment remains central to this model.

Individual factors	+ Community factors		= Individual participation choices
Motivations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Values • Beliefs • Interests 	Paths of Engagement <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Family and social ties • Organisational Affiliations • Direct recruitment • Direct marketing 	Structures of Opportunity Programs and events available in the community: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number • Diversity • Quality • Accessibility 	Methods of participation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attend • Volunteer • Donate • Perform
Resources <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Skills • Free Time • Money 			Types of activity e.g. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Concert • Play • Opera • Exhibition
			Venues <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conventional: museums, theatres etc. • Community: parks, churches, schools

Table 6: Model of cultural participation by Walker and Scott-Melnyk (2002)

In proposing a model that stresses the complex and multifaceted manner in which individual choices about cultural participation are made, this work links demographic factors such as education and income (resources) to individual agency (motivations) while highlighting the extent to which environmental (community) factors have been considered far less than either of the other two components. This absence has also been noted by Gilmore (2013) when arguing that cultural policy overlooks the specificities of place, and Brook (2013) who notes that the typical models of attendance (developed primarily to support marketing activity) have tended to overlook such environmental factors as proximity to a venue and access to public transport. In her study of opera audiences in London, Brook showed that the two highest predictors of opera attendance were accessibility to a venue and level of education. This is similar to the findings of Widdop and Cutts (2012) who considered the importance of place in relation to attendance at museums and Johnson *et. al* (2011) who found that most travel to arts events is localised and that the greater the diversity and range of cultural opportunities in a local area, the higher the number of trips being made. While the type of research outlined above highlights a complex range of factors influencing the choices made, it tends not to suggest that any of the resultant choices should be seen as any more problematic than another.

Summary

This chapter has delineated how the problem of cultural non-participation has been constructed as an object of enquiry within the plane of research. It has done so by offering an overview of research that is both a part of, and directly contributes to, the discourses of cultural participation, and the discursive logics upon which the problem relies. Using two of Howarth's (2010) three logics of critical explanation, it was first argued that existing research is generative of social logic in defining cultural participation as a distinct form of human practice about which specific claims have been made in regards its unique value. After outlining the ways in which the existence of cultural participation as a specific type of practice is affirmed by the numerous ways in which it is measured and monitored, the chapter moved on to consider some of the

explanations that have been offered about the varying contingent relations between the different subjects and objects that the existence of this practice brings in to being. Specifically the discussion focused on the political logic that sees differing patterns of cultural participation as indicative of social stratification and inequality. On this basis a problem is then constructed, the logics of which focuses on the existence of barriers that are stopping certain individuals from participating in culture, so that the role of government is then seen to be minimizing the effect these barriers have. Alternative explanations about why patterns of participation vary see such differences as inevitable, and are therefore less prominent within the discursive construction of non-participation as cultural policy problem.

Chapter 3 will now move the analysis onto a different discursive plane. Focusing on the data generated through the policy texts and qualitative interviews it will identify the two dominant discourses of cultural participation in policy and professional practice, and highlight how the problem of non-participation can only exist within the discursive logic of one of them.

Chapter 3 – The dominant discourses of cultural participation in the field of cultural policy

Chapter two has offered an analysis of how cultural participation has been constructed as an object of knowledge on the plane of research. In doing so it has highlighted some of the contrasting and complementary social and political logics that are employed. However, not all of these explanations inevitably point towards the existence of a problem, and where they do, the construction of the problem can differ. For it is not until these logics are taken into the field of cultural policy that the existence of a problem becomes a necessity. This is inevitable, because “policy is by definition instrumental, in that its aim is to achieve active change” (Bell and Oakley, 2014, p.34). As this change is intended to make society better, the object of its action must be that which is seen to be currently less than optimal – a problem that must be addressed.

As such, to understand how cultural non-participation is constructed as a societal problem in which the government can and should intervene, one must seek to analyse the existence of the problem on a different discursive plane. Therefore, Chapter 3 now turns to an analysis and discussion of the data generated through policy texts and qualitative interviews. In doing so, the discussion will simultaneously explore the construction of the problem across two discursive planes, namely those of politics and professional practice, and will particularly address research questions 2, and 3:

2. What discourses of cultural participation are dominant in the field of cultural policy?
3. What discursive logics are employed to construct non-participation as a cultural policy problem?

As will be detailed below, within the data generated there were two dominant ways in which cultural participation was spoken about, and both were often employed side by side despite their apparent contradictions. Such points of incompatibility within the data points towards the presence of differing discourses within a discursive field (Talja, 1999). Contestation between these

discourses is to be expected and is the basis of the games of truth that the presence of discourse makes possible. As such, there is no absolute list of the organisations, objects and activities that would count as cultural participation⁶⁴ in relation to the problem construction. Sometimes online activity is included, sometimes not. Cinema can be, but not always. Singing is a solution to the problem of non-participation, as long as it is in a choir and not at a karaoke bar.

The chapter focuses on outlining the logics of the two dominant discourses of cultural participation that were identified. The first - that of abundant participation - is a discourse in which not only is there an extensive range and availability of accessible cultural activities with which one can participate, but also that this number is increasing (and quite significantly so) due to the opportunities that are presented by a contemporary society that is multicultural, global and increasingly digital. The second - that of inadequate participation - is a discourse in which certain individuals and areas are represented as being faced with a deficit of accessible cultural opportunities with which to participate. As such, these individuals require some sort of state intervention in order to boost supply and/or remove the barriers that are preventing access. Each of these two discourses is considered through a focus on drawing out some of their key discursive logics (Wodak and Meyer, 2009). As will be made clear, although both discourses can and are employed within the field of cultural policy, it is only within the logics of the second that the idea of non-participation, and thus its construction as a problem, becomes possible.

3.1 The discourse of abundant participation

The discourse of abundant participation was one with which the interviewees appeared comfortable and regularly employed throughout the interviews. Within this discourse, cultural participation was represented as being something that was natural, essential and ordinary in the sense that it was something everyone did. As Interviewee 2 stated when talking about a project

⁶⁴ Or to arbitrarily advocate for the inclusion or expulsion of any particular organisation, object or activity for doing so would simply be to suggest that the researcher had greater access to the truth than either the Scottish Government or those with which the researcher spoke.

they were working on: “...*dance is at the heart of our culture, you know ceilidh dancing and all that sort of stuff, it is **something that we do naturally***”. Or as Interviewee 20 said: “ [...] there is **so much culture** out there [...] I mean there is so much that really...to quantify it is impossible...I think every type of person might have some kind of link to some kind of culture⁶⁵”. It was a discourse that was equally evident in the documentary sources analysed. For example, the Scottish Government website states that: “*Culture, creativity and a rich, dynamic heritage sit at the heart of Scotland's communities*” (2015b), while Fiona Hyslop⁶⁶ asserted that “[o]ur communities **are alive** with music, with dance, with bands, gala days, literature, with theatre and poetry. **I want that recognised and celebrated**” (2013). As the first half of this chapter will show, it is a discourse in which absolute value judgments are supposedly rejected and in which the idea of non-participation becomes impossible⁶⁷.

3.1.1 Culture as a way of life

There are two discernable strands within the discourse of abundant participation. Firstly there is the abundance of participation that comes from understanding culture as a way of life, and thus impossible for any individual to be divorced from. It is a discursive strand that explicitly rejects any attempt to specifically define culture and is evident in the statement by the Scottish Parliament that:

...the Government sees no advantage in a statutory definition of “culture” [...] even if it were possible to agree a definition of “culture” in the Parliament; it seems inevitable that it would very quickly become redundant. Ministers therefore consider a statutory definition of the “arts and culture” inappropriate and generally undesirable (Scottish Parliament, 2008, p.6)

⁶⁵ Throughout the discussion that follows in the following four chapters, quotations from the primary source data are shown in italics. All emphasis in bold has been added, unless otherwise stated.

⁶⁶ Scottish Cabinet Secretary for Culture, Europe and External Affairs.

⁶⁷ See Appendix 1.01 for further relevant examples from the data, similar to those included, above.

Indeed on their website, when outlining the importance of the national indicator on cultural engagement, the Scottish Government states that: “*Our culture is key to our sense of identity as individuals, as communities and as a nation*” (2015d). This essentially anthropological notion of culture is echoed in a number of the other policy documents that have been analysed. For example, in her 2013 speech on culture in Scotland, the Culture Secretary, Fiona Hyslop, talked about her belief that culture (and heritage) was “*of us all*” given that it was “*our heart, our soul, our essence*”, in so doing representing culture as something ordinary and a common aspect of humanity that is shared by everyone.

Interviewees were often equally reticent about offering an explicit definition of culture. Like the Scottish Government, most of the interviewees recognised that any absolute definition would be problematic given their awareness of the differing interpretations of culture that might be employed:

*I find the words culture, engagement and participation to be **contested terms and quite difficult to define*** (Interviewee 26)

*I think that some people might take quite an offence at that [laughing] depending on their **interpretation of culture*** (Interviewee 1)

*It's that question of what is culture again, and **it is just a really difficult thing to answer*** (Interviewee 41)

Likewise, many interviewees would employ an anthropological description of culture as a way of life similar to that which was identified in the policy documents. Here, as there, the definition has the potential to encompass everything someone might do and evokes the manner in which culture was understood by Raymond Williams⁶⁸ (1981):

*...**everything is kind of cultural** in its broadest sense [... ...] Scotland is a place where there is not just one culture, there is many cultures and it is something that should be celebrated, celebrated in our place in Britain and in Europe and as part of our connection to the wider world* (Interviewee 1)

⁶⁸ Williams' conception of culture was discussed in Chapter 2.

*I am aware that **culture is anything** and not just the arts and the creative stuff* (Interviewee 12)

*I find it really difficult to understand how culture doesn't touch you, it, **it's there, everywhere**.* (Interviewee 4)

*...but it is the air we breathe really, **it is all around you**.* (Interviewee 11)

*..... interestingly **I can't maybe see anything outside of culture**.* (Interviewee 26)

3.1.2 Culture as artefact

It was however evident in the interviews that as the discussion moved from discussing culture in the abstract to discussing the more concrete idea of cultural participation it was common that the definition of culture being employed changed. Specifically, when the concept of culture was attached to the concept of engagement or participation to form a compound noun, the manner in which culture was represented was always that of culture as an artefact that one might have an observable and specific type of interaction with. This was a shift that was also common within the text of the documents analysed. When this occurs, the language employed changes and it becomes more common to refer to participation or engagement *with* rather than participation or engagement *in*. As such, cultural participation becomes represented as a specific activity within a social system rather than a synonym for the social system itself, and it is in this sense that it is most commonly understood within the second discursive strand of this discourse.

Specifically it is the abundance of a mixed market economy that is represented as offering an expansive and increasing range of opportunities for the particular social interactions that are identified as examples of cultural participation. Within this discursive strand there appears to be two potential relationships that an individual can have with those activities, objects and organisations that are deemed to afford such opportunities. These are evident in the SHS that asks

two separate questions: one about attendance⁶⁹ and one about participation⁷⁰ but both are taken to be representative of cultural participation and engagement⁷¹. The first relates to activities in which the individual is more passive while the latter refers to those activities in which the individual plays a more active part, such as reading, writing or giving a performance. From this perspective, opportunities for cultural participation becomes something that requires conscious affirmative action by the individual and, as interviewee 14 stated, can also be “*offered*” or as the policy documents all suggest, “*provided*”.

The logics of this discursive strand were evident in the answers given by interviewees when asked to describe their own cultural participation. All of those spoken to mentioned either certain activities in which they played an explicitly active role, or more commonly, attendance at various types of organisations and events that required the affirmative action of “*going to*”:

I go to the theatre; I read a great deal [... ...] my sort of everyday life would be full of going to galleries and going to theatres and things like that...
(Interviewee 11)

*...movies, festival, **going to stuff** with [my son], panto season is coming up, boxing day outing ... so yes, I am a keen reader, go to the movies....*
(Interviewee 5)

As a person? ... Well obviously theatre, but I would also say sport, cinema, TV, newspapers learning, like museums and galleries and that type of thing. (Interviewee 14)

*I like visiting museums and galleries, I like **going to** the theatre, that kind of thing.* (Interviewee 1)

I go to things. I go to theatre, ballet, cinema, whatever (Interviewee 38)

⁶⁹ The question related to attendance is: Did you attend any of the following events during the past 12 months.

⁷⁰ The question related to participation is: Have you taken part in the following cultural activities (in the last 12 months).

⁷¹ The apparent assumption being that if an individual has had either of these two types of social interaction over the previous twelve months then they are ‘engaged’ with culture, if not then they are ‘not-engaged’ and thus a ‘non-participant’.

*Well very obviously because it is part of my job, the museums and galleries sector, fairly consistent reader... all sorts of literature, literary review magazines and things. And I suppose classical music would be my other main cultural interest or participation ...sort of radio, buying CDs **going to concerts that sort of thing.** (Interviewee 17)⁷²*

While representing cultural participation as specific types of interaction with an activity, object, or organisation narrows the scope of the abundant participation discourse to specific types of practice, there remains a high degree of tolerance for what forms this practice could take. While this acknowledgment of the diversity of ways in which someone could participate with culture was most explicit in the interviews, it could also be identified in the other data analysed, for example Fiona Hyslop's assertion that the cultural life of Scotland:

*...cannot be reduced to a single style or image, rather, they are a wealth of what we might describe as "stories" that **take many different forms, as diverse and the land, peoples and places of this complex country.** (2013)*

Likewise, Creative Scotland's ten year strategic plan included an aim to ensure that "Everyone can access and enjoy artistic and creative experiences" (2014c). This use of the label "artistic and creative experiences" has the potential to encompass a huge range of activities, especially given that Creative Scotland's own research had shown the public included activities like gardening and baking within what they understood as a creative experience (2014a). Acknowledging the multiplicity of ways in which it may be manifest means that this discursive strand continues to represent cultural participation as something ordinary, everyday, and indivisible from the subjective experiences of the individual. It therefore offers a point of overlap with the other primary strand⁷³ that comprises the discourse of abundant participation, and facilitates the near simultaneous use of both without causing any significant discursive dissonance.

⁷² See Appendix 1.02 for further relevant examples from the data.

⁷³ Culture as a way of life.

3.1.3 The rejection of absolute value judgements

The representation of cultural participation as a diverse range of activities was complemented within this discourse by a significant reticence amongst the majority of interviewees for making explicit value judgments about the cultural participation choices of others. Indeed many were keen to stress equivalence between one type of practice and another:

[Asking about the national indicator] *Is it, for instance, going to see a rock gig...that is...so that has the same sort of...as it were...merit as going to a symphonic concert? **It's not that I am making judgments here.*** (Interviewee 10)

*... well engagement with all forms of culture so, I don't know, going to concerts? Listening to the radio? Almost anything actually. **And I don't just mean classical concerts;** I mean popular music, any sort of music or concert.* (Interviewee 17)

[After discussing the value of ballet] *...**but I am also really into street dancing** [laughs], which is hilarious being in a ballet role, but it has kind of taken off recently and we did a project with parkour here, so I am really kind of into urban artforms.* (Interviewee 2)

*...**and I am not only talking about high end high arts** like opera and ballet or whatever...* (Interviewee 14)

Certainly in general, interviewees were surprised when they were faced with some of those activities that were not included as part of the SHS.

[After discovering that listening to music or watching the television didn't count in the SHS] *Oh God, well that is typical isn't it...* (Interviewee 21)

Interviewee 17: *But it can include something like LoveFilm, watching movies at home?*

Interviewer: *No it has to have been a visit to the cinema*

Interviewee 17: *Oh, but that's odd isn't it!? Because people more and more watch on their ever larger screens at home, I mean I am one of them [... ...] They have, by vocation, defined the consumption or participation in culture*

haven't they? That has already come out in what you have been describing, which all strikes me as a bit odd.

Although not all expressed this opinion, many felt that the official definition used to measure cultural participation should be widened to include listening to music, watching the TV, watching comedians, or reading comics; all activities that have at various points been placed under the label of popular or mass culture and presented in opposition to that which was traditionally understood as the high or fine arts:

*...but **you are culturally engaging**, that is obvious, you are clearly, it is nonsense really, you are engaging twice over if you are doing those two things [listening to the radio and going online] (Interviewee 35)*

*I think **those people sitting at home watching television and listening to radio are**, you know, **having a great deal of culture** just by doing that, and going to the pub and talking to their friends who will be, you know, who may well have seen the same or other culture. (Interviewee 20)⁷⁴*

3.1.4 Digital participation

In particular, within this discourse new technology is presented as having diversified the ways in which cultural participation can occur and which cultural organisations are encouraged to embrace as part of a digital approach to increasing access. Indeed many digital projects are pointed to as examples of cultural participation projects, projects that Fiona Hyslop alluded to as “*great examples of improvements to access through digital media*” (2013). Indeed it was part of the Scottish Government’s Digital Strategy that they would “*bring greater access to Scotland’s excellent heritage and culture, and preserve our cultural works by making vast content available to people online at home or at local libraries*” (2011, p.9). Likewise, in discussion about the contribution that the creative industries can make to their corporate plan, Creative Scotland states that “*digital networks and platforms make participation and engagement with the creative industries more universally accessible*” (2015a). Furthermore, digital is

⁷⁴ See Appendix 1.03 for further relevant examples from the data.

also one of their “*connecting themes*” for the next ten years and seen to support their aim that everyone has access to “*great art and culture*” (2014c). Examples of such projects include:

- The Scottish Arts Council’s support for the creation of the online arts site *Central Station* as part of a funding stream intended to provide “*more, wider, better participation in the arts*” (SAC, 2009);
- The National Theatre of Scotland’s development of a strand of work entitled *Five Minute Theatre* in which anyone, anywhere can upload a piece of theatre to be streamed on their dedicated *Vimeo* site (2015);
- Simulcasting such as the on-going *NLive* project which is highlighted as something that Creative Scotland would like to see more of (Creative Scotland, 2014c);
- The 2.75 million web visitors digitally engaged with the Cultural Programme of the 2014 Commonwealth Games was picked out as part of the evidence that the project had been a success (Creative Scotland, 2015c).

3.1.5 Hierarchies of practice

However, within this strand of the discourse of abundant participation, there did appear to be two tiers of cultural participation into which activities could be organized. Firstly, with regards to certain activities there was no question of their status as cultural participation. Despite the researcher offering no definition of how cultural participation was being understood in the study, at no point did any interviewee exhibit uncertainty about directly referring to theaters, museums, the visual arts, orchestras, dance, opera, ballet, arts festivals, art-house cinema, and reading; all of which were also readily employed within the policy documents as appropriate examples of cultural participation. Neither did the interviewees question any of the activities that their own organisations did, nor any of the other activities and organisations that received public subsidy.

However the majority of interviewees equally exhibited a desire to make it clear that they did not limit their understanding of cultural participation to these sorts of activities alone and as such there were a second tier of activities which, although it appeared to be implied that they were a different type of cultural participation, could be considered as such none the less:

Then you have a wider conception that would take in sports clubs, bingo, going to the pub and playing dominos, all of those things that count as cultural activities within communities (Interviewee 25)

Some people on a Saturday go to a football game, some people go to a matinee at the theatre and some people go to the cinema and some people go shopping, but what is great is that they are all out there engaging (Interviewee 38)

...depends if you extend environmental, community garden stuff into... as a form of culture, so I don't know, are we including that? (Interviewee 26)

...various different clubs, out of school groups various things like that em, shopping, em, I don't know, is shopping culture, are we including shopping in culture (Interviewee 1)

As shall become clear, within the discourse of inadequate participation, patterns of participation with the majority of these second tier activities were not understood as part of the problem construction under analysis.

3.1.6 Creative Industries

Many of the activities that appeared to be placed within the secondary tier of cultural participation were those that might commonly be pointed to as examples of the creative industries, given that they included such things as music festivals, comedy performances, live music gigs, radio and television. This is indicative of the extent to which, within the discourse of abundant participation, there appears to be no restriction on acknowledging that “government sponsored culture is not the means of cultural provision that captures the attention of most people most of the time” (McGuigan, 2004, p.42). This appears a reasonable acknowledgement given that, as Holden has noted,

money spent by governments and sponsors on culture is “dwarfed by the public’s appetite to pay for its own enjoyment of culture” (2010, p.53). As one interviewee⁷⁵ stated:

.... 90% of people are engaged but are they really engaged in those things that are being funded? For a lot of it, it is not, it is things that are provided by the market, things like thrillers and the big musical or something, or the panto, where we are not in that economy at all, we are not funding anything in there ⁷⁶

This means that the discourse of abundant participation can therefore refer to and be supported by the discourses of the creative industries⁷⁷ (for a discussion of the creative industries in relation to cultural policy see Flew 2012; Miller, 2009; Oakley, 2009; Roodhouse, 2008; Black, 2006; Hesmondhalgh and Pratt, 2005; Garnham, 2005) in which an ever burgeoning supply of cultural products is understood to be accompanied by an insatiable desire amongst the populace for ever greater cultural consumption⁷⁸. Indeed such a perspective might allow one to claim that cultural participation is in rude health given that 170 million cinema tickets are sold annually in the UK (EAO, 2011), music festivals and concerts are in a period of substantial growth (BBC, 2012), and 71% of the almost 800 million visits to online video websites were to access music (33%), TV (17%), film (11%) and games (10%) (DS, 2011).

⁷⁵ This interviewee worked in a role in which they made decisions about what types or organisations and activities would receive funding.

⁷⁶ The ever-booming nature of the creative industries is a discourse that is commonly employed on the discursive plane of the media. See, for example, BBC News (2105) *Creative Industries are booming*.

⁷⁷ The UK is regularly presented as being a world leader in this sector and the scale of growth is constantly argued to be greater than that exhibited by the rest of the economy (the Warwick Commission 2015 recently recapped a number of these arguments and news coverage continues to report favourable statistics, see BBC News 2015). Scotland does not stand apart from this and alongside the arts and screen, the creative industries are one of the three sectors that Creative Scotland is charged to support.

⁷⁸ This discourse is complemented by the discursive logic of creativity (Osborne, 2003) that is equally ubiquitous in this field and which suggests that creativity “is no longer the exclusive prerogative of geniuses or great thinkers, but of all of us” (Osborne, 2003).

3.1.7 The impossibility of non-participation within the discourse of abundant participation

The discourse of abundant participation and its two primary strands collectively align with Raymond Williams' assertions that "we live in an expanding culture, and all the elements in this culture are themselves expanding" (2014 [1958]). Empirically this discourse makes use of the claims to knowledge made by research such as that of Bennett *et al.* (2009) and Miles (2013) that presents evidence of the rich and diverse nature of people's everyday lives⁷⁹. It is thus evident that within the logics of this discourse, the idea of non-participation does not and arguably could not exist. Firstly, if the culture of cultural participation is "*of us all*" (as it is suggested within the more anthropological strand of this discourse) then every social interaction would have the potential to be an example of cultural participation, it would not be possible to exist outside of it. Secondly, within the strand that represents cultural participation as a specific type of social interaction there is such a profusion of opportunities with which to participate, combined with such reticence about making value judgements about what type of interactions count that it becomes hard to imagine how anyone is not doing something that could be understood as cultural participation. Indeed when asked explicitly if it was possible to not participate in culture, the answer given by interviewees was almost consistently that it simply was not⁸⁰:

Interviewee 2: *I think people are naturally inclined to be cultural beings [...] I think it is very tricky not to participate in culture [... ...]*

Interviewer: *So is it possible to not participate in culture?*

Interviewee 2: *[Laughing] No, I think it is very tricky not to participate in culture, it's everywhere*

⁷⁹ Findings from the Cultural Pathfinder Project (Crichton & Willis, 2008), Creative Scotland (Creative Scotland, 2014a) and Miles (2013) suggest that in relation to creativity and cultural participation many individuals both considered and were undertaking a much broader range of activities than policies concerned with increasing cultural participation currently address. These included activities such as shopping, bingo, sport and parks.

⁸⁰ It was acknowledged by a number of interviewees that certain factors, in particular physical health, might limit someone's ability to undertake all the cultural activity that they may wish.

I mean show us a place where there is no culture; it doesn't exist
(Interviewee 11)

...if there really is such a person that doesn't do anything ... and I really don't think there are that many. (Interviewee 4)

...everyone is involved in culture in one way or another... (Interviewee 6)⁸¹

Speaking from within the discourse of abundant participation, these conclusions appear wholly sensible. However, if there is so much culture, the population is so inherently alive with creativity, and the creative industries are so successful, then the core research question of this study - Why is there a problem of cultural non-participation? - becomes even more of a puzzle. For given the profusion of cultural participation that is represented as occurring, one might be forgiven for wondering if, rather than a problem of non-participation, individuals could be in danger of a cultural participation surfeit. Foucault was perhaps right when he suggested, “the problem with our culture is probably that there is too much of it around, not too little. Our problem is overproduction, cultural hubris perhaps, nemesis no” (cited in Osborne 2003, p.76). However it is not within this discourse that the problem of non-participation exists, instead it is within the discourse of inadequate participation that it is constructed and it is to a consideration of this discourse that the discussion now turns.

3.2 The discourse of inadequate participation

Given that increasing cultural engagement is one of the Scottish Government's fifty national indicators and one of the only specifically stated national cultural policy objectives, it is perhaps surprising that the response from interviewees was most commonly one of ignorance about the objective combined with a general lack of awareness about, and interest in, the specifics of cultural policy and policymaking. Indeed other than interviewees 5, 14, 16 and 26 (one of whom was involved in its creation), the only individuals who had any specific knowledge of the national indicator were those from the Scottish Government,

⁸¹ See Appendix 1.04 for further relevant examples from the data.

Edinburgh Council or Creative Scotland. Even in these cases there were varying degrees of confidence with regards to their ability to explain exactly what the indicator measured or state what the current rate of cultural participation in Scotland was:

I probably should be aware. I'm sure someone in the office is aware [laughing] I hope! (Interviewee 4)

Ha! That's a good question! I should probably know seeing as I work for [multiple publicly funded organisations] [...] but policy is a bit hazy to me (Interviewee 18)

Do you know I don't think I did know [about the indicator] [laughs]! Perhaps you could describe it to me (Interviewee 17)

I guess it's obvious I haven't read the national indicators! (Interviewee 21)

[Asked what they knew about the national indicator] *Not a huge amount really [Interviewer: Anything?] No [...] I may be referencing these things a lot but I don't really take an interest in them. (Interviewee 41)*⁸²

Yet despite this apparent lack of both awareness and interest in the specifics of the indicator, how it was established, and what it is intended to do, none of the interviewees made any spontaneous indication that they felt the suggestion there was a problem of cultural non-participation was unreasonable in any way. The interviewees did not have to have seen the evidence that the SHS is purported to offer in order to accept the knowledge that it represents. For despite the majority of interviewees having explicitly stated that it was essentially impossible for someone not to participate in culture, all of them continued to speak as though non-participation was not only possible but also a problem that needed to be addressed.

This is evidence of the extent to which the many component parts of a dispositive need not have material contact in order for them to share a similar

⁸² See Appendix 1.05 for further relevant examples from the data.

conception of the truth. Considering that none of the interviewees asked the researcher at any point to define or explain what cultural non-participation was and yet continued to have an extensive discussion about it using a similar discursive logic to that which could also be found in the policy documents, one can presume that there was a shared understanding about what, or perhaps who, was being discussed. For example, shortly before Interviewee 12 stated that it was impossible not to engage in culture, they had also spoken of the extent to which *“the middle classes were already engaged”* (suggesting that others were not). Likewise, Interviewee 41 was insistent that everyone was culturally active in some way and it was patronizing to assume otherwise, yet also stated that not everyone would want to *“access culture”* (thus suggesting it was possible not to access culture). And while Interviewee 19 stated that culture was *“a universal part of our lives”* it was still something that needed intervention and therefore *“as a society we should encourage cultural participation”* (suggesting that without encouragement it may not occur). These quotes are all indicative of the extent to which a second discourse was also dominant, one in which non-participation becomes possible because the discursive logics that it employs contains far greater distinctions about what types of practice does and doesn’t count as cultural participation. This discourse also offers explanations as to factors that can stop someone from participating in the manner that is implied they should. So it is within this discourse, that of inadequate participation, in which the problem under analysis is constructed and which the remainder of this chapter will focus on discussing.

3.2.1 Cultural deficit

Despite their contradictions, the discourse of inadequate participation is regularly employed in close proximity to that of abundant participation. For example, two sentences after Fiona Hyslop was stressing the need to celebrate how alive with culture Scotland’s communities are, she had moved on to suggest that *“[t]hose who are **least provided for** are often not just materially deprived, but **lack opportunities to access culture**”*. This shifts the narrative onto the discourse of inadequate participation, a discourse that translates into practice

as a deficit model of cultural policy making (Jancovich, 2011; Miles and Sullivan, 2010) in which some individuals are assumed to face a shortage of culture to participate with⁸³. It is this discourse that provides the discursive logic to statements such as the commitment of Creative Scotland to ensure all of the organisations in the Regular Funding Portfolio “*have committed to **increasing access** to artistic and creative work amongst communities across Scotland*” (2015i emphasis added). The assumption being that access for some communities is currently at subpar levels. The notion of a cultural deficit is also reinforced by the use of the prefix ‘under’, which is a common feature across the data analysed. Certain groups are seen to be “*under represented*” or “*under participating*” suggesting an insufficiency or inadequacy in the numbers undertaking certain activities. However, what ‘adequate’ would be is never addressed, it is simply assumed to be more.

3.2.2 Cultural provision and opportunities to participate

The structure of this discourse locates the state at the center of addressing this lack of access to culture through their financial support of selected organisations and activities – a fundamental discursive practice of the dispositive of which this discourse is a part. The state and the organisations they support are represented as providing something that otherwise would not be available to the populace, and as such the concept of provision was a common feature of the written texts analysed:

*Our aim is to ensure that the **cultural provision** we fund is **available** to a diversity of people* (Creative Scotland, 2015h)

*Local authorities contribute information about their **provision of culture*** (Scottish Government, 2010b)

*We can count it as a success that we have increased **cultural provision*** (Creative Scotland, 2014c).

⁸³ This is the model that Gilmore (2013) has argued was employed by Arts Council England when they set out to banish the UK’s ‘cultural cold spots’.

*Local authorities have a key role to ensure **provision of recreation and culture** for the people in their area* (Scottish Government, 2008)

*... persistent inequalities in **arts and cultural provision**....* (Creative Scotland, 2015f)

Exactly what is being provided becomes clearer upon consideration of Fiona Hyslop's speech in which she stated that: *"I believe it is our duty to ensure that everyone has the opportunity to access the arts and cultural experiences* (2013). What this points to is the extent to which it is access to *opportunities* for cultural participation that is being provided by the state, a sentiment expressed by a number of the interviewees:

*I think what we are trying to address is to look at people with the very small maps, who haven't had a chance to kind of like, haven't had that many **opportunities to experience** interesting culture and creativity and to try and grow that.* (Interviewee 22)

*...**have they had the opportunity** for it to engender excitement in them, or speak to them, and if they haven't then that is something to address...* (Interviewee 9)

*I would hope that they think it is something like building awareness of the **cultural opportunities** that are available to people and sort of connecting people with, with what exists and **kind of... the opportunities available*** (Interviewee 12)

*We need to as a society ensure that there are **opportunities** for everyone who is in this society to at least try before they dismiss it, before we can assume that there is an average of forty to sixty percent of people who aren't going to be interested in this so let's not bother* (Interviewee 20)

*I guess it's that thing of making sure that people have had the **opportunity** to try it* (Interviewee 41)

*It's about making sure people know what **the opportunities** are* (Interviewee 38)

*My job is to **create opportunities** for other people to be engaged with culture* (Interviewee 39)

Given the use of the SHS survey as the tool by which the Scottish Government seeks to measure its progress in addressing the problem of cultural non-participation, the implicit logic appears to be that equality of access to opportunities should result in parity of uptake, and that success should be measured as such. However, as has been shown by the results of the SHS, there are varying rates of participation across the different types of activities that it measures and some of the lowest rates of participation are with those activities and organisations that receive the greatest public subsidy. This then requires further explanation within the logics of the discourse to explain why, when an opportunity for cultural participation is provided, the majority of the populace fail to take it.

3.2.3 Barriers and outreach

The explanation provided for this can be found in the regularity with which the concept of providing opportunities is regularly combined with the concept of barriers. As interviewee 13 stated: *“I suppose that the idea is that they [non-participants] are **less likely** to get the **opportunity** to make the choice **because** there are X amount **of barriers** in their way”*. Likewise, Interviewee 26 suggested that when setting up an arts space *“it was all about getting people in because I felt that **there were a lot of barriers** for certain kinds of people”*. As such, this discourse represents the practice of increasing cultural participation as being about the removal of the obstructions that are seen to be limiting the ability of some to participate (see, for example, Creative Scotland 2012b). Policy documents make clear that those organisations receiving state funding require *“a clear approach to **identifying the barriers** to taking part in the arts”* (Creative Scotland, 2014b) implying that their practice should then mitigate against them. Indeed a number of the interviewees referenced the extent to which the practice of their organisations was to some extent about the removal or reduction of barriers:

*... so I think if we were able to provide opportunities for groups of people, you know target audiences, to come and engage in a way that perhaps **takes away some of those intimidating barriers**... (Interviewee 16)*

*....it is part of the annual feedback as to how we have tried to actively engage with more people, ways in which we have **reduced barriers to attendance** (Interviewee 8)*

The specific activities intended to remove these barriers were commonly referred to as “*outreach*” or “*outreach and engagement work*” (see, for example, Interviewees 2, 12, 25, 36 and 41) and there is a variety of practice that can be represented as such. These various practices could be placed on a continuum at one end of which would be those that are broad and un-targeted such as free access to state museums and galleries or financial support for touring work to more geographically remote locations. At the other they would be more narrowly focused such as the subsidy of theatre tickets for certain demographic groups or time limited outreach and engagement projects with specific communities undertaken precisely for this reason.

As has been discussed in Chapter 2, the concept of barriers has been extensively researched and such research adds discursive weight to their taken for granted existence through providing a logic and language with which they can be authoritatively spoken about. Studies such as those outlined previously, have generally identified three broad types of barrier: practical (distance, cost, lack of awareness, opening times etc.); physical (primarily disability or age related); or mental (psychological, lack of understanding, perception of risk) and examples of each were evident in the responses of the interviewees:

*I think there might be an assumption that... some things are expensive **[PRACTICAL BARRIER]**, that there is a cost attached to it, whether that is paying to get into a gallery or paying to see a show. (Interviewee 1)*

*...some people are not going because they don't know about it **[PRACTICAL BARRIER]**, some people are not going because they perceive it is not for them **[MENTAL BARRIER]** ...some people are not going*

because they don't live somewhere where it is available [**PRACTICAL BARRIER**] (Interviewee 2)

*...you get this kind of situation where people are able to explore stuff that they may have been blocked from experiencing. We talk a lot about barriers, what are the barriers to participation and is that about, is it very **physical** barriers, like the fact that the place that the art is done is elsewhere, or is it about, you know, **psychological** barriers, not engaging because of the perception about what this is, or is it about, you know, just **social** barriers, outside influences, peer pressure, that it is not cool to do stuff, so it is about trying to strip away those barriers* (Interviewee 22)

I think that there are all sorts of societal barriers which make people think they might not enjoy it... [**MENTAL BARRIER**] (Interviewee 19)⁸⁴

The notion that individuals face such barriers appears to be a plausible one. Society is not equitable and there are differences in the degree to which individuals are free to pursue their own interests and desires in their leisure time. Relative poverty, lack of time and geographic location are all potentially limiting factors upon an individual's ability to exert their own agency with regards to their non-working life. All of these factors are very likely to account for some patterns of behaviour in relation to cultural participation, but what the problem construction implies is that the individual would, or should, understand these patterns as a problem requiring state intervention.

3.2.4 Market failure

Discursively representing cultural participation as something that requires provision and/or the removal of barriers implies it is a need that individuals are unable to fulfil themselves. It therefore represents it as a particular form of exchanged based market relationship⁸⁵. For as Adam Smith (2010 [1904]) in *The Wealth of Nations* argued: if we are to assume that we are unable to fulfil

⁸⁴ See Appendix 1.06 for further relevant examples from the data.

⁸⁵ McGuigan (2004) has argued that understanding culture in this way is part of the dominance of a neo-liberal ideology in which it is impossible to think outside of market based relationships. However in the context of this study the manner in which cultural participation is understood suggests that irrespective of whether it takes place in the market, or through state subsidy the practice is understood as some sort of exchange between participant and producer.

our own needs then we become merchants, and we cannot deny the market in which we must therefore live. As such, if within this discourse the function of state funded organisations is predicated on their ability to provide the populace with something they cannot provide for themselves then a market has been brought into being. This is indicative of the extent to which, in constructing culture as an object of knowledge, cultural production and cultural consumption were almost immediately understood as two distinct things (Connor, 1992).

However, in the dominant discourses of a free market economy such as is adopted in Scotland and the UK, the presumption is that the government will avoid intervention in markets other than where an imperfect environment means that market forces alone cannot guarantee an optimal efficient outcome. This is a situation described in economics as market failure and is a concept that is central to the construction of non-participation as a problem. The regularity with which market failure is employed as a justification for state intervention in the cultural participation of the populace has been noted by both Creigh-Tyte & Stiven (2001) and McGuigan (2004). Market failure is said to occur for a number of reasons, most commonly in relation to:

...imperfect competition or monopoly, economies of scale, imperfect information (information asymmetry or adverse selection), or where no market equilibrium exists (in the case of public goods, merit goods, externalities and incomplete markets) (Creigh-Tyte and Stiven, 2001, p.174)

By employing the discourse of market failure, the discourse of inadequate participation locates the cultural participation choices of the populace within the category of activities that the state not only has a legitimate right but also an obligation to intervene in. As Interviewee 19 stated: *I believe that **cultural provision** is one of, is one of the.... is a **core responsibility** of a government and of policy, along with health provision and education provision.*

While the term market failure was only explicitly used once in any of the data generated – *“I sometimes think of this in terms of **market failure**. Artists are in effect doing something for which they say, in effect, I struggle to break even as an individual or an organisation”* (Interviewee 25) - the principles of market failure are fundamental to the discursive logic upon which the problem construction depends. The argument that the state should take an active role in providing access to opportunities for cultural participation and mitigating against barriers to such opportunities is predicated upon an assumption that there is an imperfection in the market. This imperfection is assumed to affect the capacity of individuals to interact with something they otherwise would or should if they were fully able to pursue the maximisation of their own utility. However, as shall now be discussed, exactly what sort of market failure is occurring with regards to cultural participation is never made clear.

Firstly, while it may be argued that encouraging cultural participation contributes to the public good, there is a difference between *the* public good and *a* public good. Public goods are those that it is argued the state should seek to provide because the nature of the good negatively impacts a private provider’s ability to gain adequate reward and thus open market provision would be less than socially optimal (Creigh-Tyte and Stiven, 2001). However, in and of themselves the majority of organisations and activities that the government does provide subsidy for are not public goods, for they do not adhere to the two core principles of non-exclusivity and non-rivalry outlined by Samuelson (1954). Many subsidised activities are held in spaces that effectively allow individuals to be excluded (theatres, galleries, studios, cinemas etc.) and as many who have attempted to see the Mona Lisa might attest, there is a point at which the number of people viewing it negatively affects the interaction one has with it. While there may be that which is subsidised that could be described as quasi or mixed public goods – such as certain public sculptures – they are few and far between. And so there appears to be no reason why the activities and organisations that receive public subsidy might not be provided as private goods since they hold the potential for an effective market to be established.

Indeed it is just such markets that Cowen (1998) argues have developed very successfully throughout history:

Music and the arts have been moving away from government funding since the Middle Ages. The Renaissance, the Enlightenment, the nineteenth century Romantic Movement and twentieth century modernism all brought art further into the market sphere. Today, most of the important work in film, music, literature, painting and sculpture is sold as a commodity. Contemporary art is capitalist art, and the history of art has been a history of struggle to establish markets (1998, p.36)

However there are alternative models of market failure that are often evoked within the discourse of inadequate participation. For example, merit goods are understood to be those activities and organisations with which participation is deemed to be intrinsically desirable and that therefore the state should seek to equalise participation with on the grounds of social equality and the public good (not in this case *a* public good, but rather for the general good of the public). If the public are unable or unwilling to participate with the merit good then they must be supported, encouraged or compelled to do so in the form of cultural participation policies.

Leaving to one side for the time being the extent to which some suggest that merit goods are “simply a means of dressing-up policy-makers’ paternalistic value judgements” (Creigh-Tyte and Stiven, 2001, p.176) it is unclear as to what merit is intrinsic to those goods receiving subsidy that an individual cannot get elsewhere. As shall be discussed in Chapter 4, while the dominant discourses of cultural policy tend to focus on the externalities⁸⁶ that cultural participation may bring - education, social cohesion, wellbeing etc. (claims that gain legitimacy through the existence of the type of research discussed in Chapter 2) - once again it must be stressed that there is little to no evidence that

⁸⁶ Externalities are the indirect effects of the activities of an individual or organisation that have an effect on other individuals or organisations for which no compensation is paid.

the positive externalities identified are in any way specific to those activities and organisations receiving state subsidy. Indeed as Moss (2009) eloquently notes in his review of *Gifts of the Muse* (Mccarthy *et al.*, 2005) almost all of the positive externalities that may be generated by an interaction with the type of activities and organisations most commonly receiving state subsidy can be equally generated by alternative activities that someone is most likely already doing:

Captivation? If I'm running a race or performing delicate surgery, am I not equally captivated while doing so? Expanded capacity for empathy: does this not happen to me when I volunteer at a homeless shelter? Cognitive growth: could I not see many of the same effects from taking a class in computer programming or statistical analysis? Creation of social bonds: you're telling me that playing on an amateur sports team, following World Cup soccer, going to Star Trek conventions don't all do the exact same things? Expression of communal meaning: well, what the hell do you call religious services? (Moss 2009, n.p.)

If, as the Scottish Government acknowledges elsewhere, activities such as sport share the capacity to offer individuals the opportunity to gain similar positive impacts to those that are commonly associated with cultural participation (Ruiz, 2004), why does it matter if they are indeed a cultural non-participant? Furthermore, even if a unique intrinsic merit of cultural participation were to be proposed and evidenced, any suggestion that it would be universally provided by every opportunity that the state provides falls foul of the fallacy of homogeneity with regards to both treatment and effect (DiMaggio, 2002). No utility or benefit from an experience can be guaranteed. The experience of each individual will differ in relation to numerous circumstantial factors and therefore, at best, any activity may afford the potential for utility but it cannot be guaranteed, and neither may it result in the utility that was desired. Yet despite all of the above arguments against it, the logics of market failure are still employed within the discourse of inadequate provision. The opportunities for

cultural participation provided by the state are implicitly represented as either a public or merit good offering a utility to those doing it that they would not gain otherwise or elsewhere.

However the discourse of market failure and the suggestion that there is a need for the state to provide access to opportunities for cultural participation is one that has no logic within the discourse of abundant participation - discussed in the first half of this chapter - where cultural participation is either a universal part of life or readily available through a highly successful market. To do so leads to the paradox identified by the Warwick Commission when its authors' stated that the participation gap "is not caused by a lack of demand among the public for cultural and creative expression" (2014, p.33). However within the discourse of inadequate participation the potential sites for cultural participation are no longer as numerous, and there are far clearer distinctions between the different types of participation that are possible. For despite Fiona Hyslop's claim that Scotland's cultural life was as diverse as the land, people and places of Scotland, the data suggest that the opportunities for cultural participation that the state has any interest in providing access to are far less expansive.

For example, Fiona Hyslop wants Scotland to be nourished by "*wonderful songs, poems, stories, drama, dance, painting and sculpture*" (2013). Likewise, the Scottish Government's guide for local authorities on the impact of culture (2008) explicitly mentions only art, story-telling, music, museums, heritage, visual art, performing art, theatre events and libraries. Furthermore, the imagery employed in the same document suggests cultural participation is either: a performance; a festival; a museum; a historic site; or playing a musical instrument. As Hyslop's 2013 speech exhibits, the market failure and the resultant non-participation that it is represented as causing is not considered in relation to the same range of potential sites of cultural participation that communities are represented as being "*alive with*" within the discourse of abundant participation. Indeed in providing illustrative detail to support her

assertion that the “*materially deprived*” lack access to culture, Hyslop goes on to emphasise that “*not everyone can get to galleries, theatres, museums and performance spaces*”. And thus within the discourse of inadequate participation the problem of non-participation becomes possible because there are discursive limitations to what can be understood as providing an opportunity for cultural participation, and therefore about which the government would be concerned if someone was not participating.

3.2.5 Delineating the limits of cultural participation

In attempting to understand what counts as cultural participation within the discourse of inadequate participation, the researcher first looked to the SHS given that it is the results of the SHS that are used as part of the evidence that a problem exists, in addition to being the tool by which progress is supposedly measured. A rudimentary analysis immediately highlights a whole host of distinctions about what does and doesn’t count as cultural participation, examples of which include:

- A visit to the records office does count, whereas going to see a comedian wouldn’t, unless the comedian was seen as part of a festival;
- Buying a book is cultural participation, but buying a CD isn’t, irrespective of how much music is on that CD;
- Someone participates in culture when purchasing a painting, but not when viewing that same painting at home. Although a painting seen once in a public exhibition is cultural participation seeing another painting every day in your own home is not;
- Going to a craft exhibition is, but not going to buy craft at a market, unless that craft is for sale within a gallery as a work of art. This is despite the fact that buying craft would count as participating with creative activity according to Creative Scotland (2015a). It can only be assumed therefore that not all forms of creative activity count as a site for cultural participation.

One is then faced with the difficulty of making sense of these distinctions. It would be disingenuous to suggest that it cleaves along the canonical rules of the high or fine arts discourse of liberal humanism (Belfiore and Bennett, 2010; Jordan and Weedon, 1995) that Griswold (2013) argues remains commonly prevalent in society. While the choice of noun and adjective used by Creative Scotland to describe the purpose of their Public Engagement Fund – “*to widen participation and address barriers to engagement in **high quality arts***” (2015b, emphasis added) – might point towards the traditional high versus low binary, the actuality of what is included as cultural participation in the SHS (e.g. panto, live DJ sets, and country music) belies this oversimplification. In fact the rhetoric of the high arts discourse was something that the majority of interviewees explicitly rejected, or at least implicitly avoided⁸⁷. As Interviewee 19 said: *I make no distinction, I genuinely make no distinction between different forms of work, you know high art, low art I just think it's complete nonsense and I personally don't understand the difference*”. Indeed a number of interviewees spoke about cultural participation projects they had done that made use of activities such as tattoo design (Interviewee 12), parkour (Interviewee 14), and live DJs (Interviewees 1 & 18), all of which should be dismissed as popular culture if the discursive logic of the high arts was being employed. In this regard, both the stated belief and practice of the majority of interviewees appears to stand in opposition to Jensen’s (2002) claim that while the high arts continue to be seen as a tonic and thus that which the state wants to encourage participation with, the popular arts and media continues to be seen as a toxin. While this may be the case in some circumstances, within the field of cultural policy any division is not so neat.

However, that does not negate the fact that there were significant implicit systems of distinctions and hierarchies that were present in all of the data generated⁸⁸. Firstly, in relation to the SHS these distinctions were particularly evident with regards to the manner that the results have been presented. For

⁸⁷ Although there were some exceptions (primarily those interviewees who had worked in the cultural sector for more than 30 years (for example see Interviewees 17 and 27).

⁸⁸ See Appendix 1.07 for further relevant examples from the data.

example, pantomimes and musicals are labelled as “other” theatre performances, discrete from drama and opera. Likewise for rock and pop music, both of which are named and measured discretely from the overall figure for live music. This distinction occurs despite the fact that 16% of the population had attended these types of music making it more than twice as popular as classical music and three times as popular as Jazz, both of which were included in the core figure for live music participation. This is mirrored in the 2008 report on the Scottish version of the English *Taking Part* survey that included specific sets of statistics presenting rates of cultural participation *after* excluding from the results: rock; pop; country music; and going to the cinema (Scottish Arts Council, 2008). The same type of distinctions can also be found in some of the research that has critiqued the SHS, for although McCall and Playford (2012) have questioned the extent to which the activities asked about accurately measure cultural participation, their concern appears to be the inclusion of activities that they believe many would not consider to be cultural participation rather than any omissions that may have occurred or indeed the impossibility of the task attempted.

It is also interesting to note the degree to which cultural participation with the creative industries is never referred to as the type of cultural participation that is understood as a solution to the problem of non-participation. Indeed a whole range of practice that within the discourse of abundant participation can be used as legitimate instances of effective cultural policy are never considered as having contributed towards reducing cultural non-participation. For example, in stressing the value of the creative industries in Scotland, Fiona Hyslop chose to highlight the success of *Harris Tweed* and the £200 million contribution they make to the Scottish economy as well as fashion designers *Bebarouque* and their elaborate body-stockings that are worn by the likes of singer Katy Perry. Likewise, in their investigation into how the growth of the creative industries might best be supported, the Scottish Parliament focused on TV, film and video game production (Scottish Parliament, 2014). However in neither case was it

suggested that these policy interventions were in any way related to the Scottish Government's desire to increase cultural participation.

Statistically, both Fiona Hyslop and the Scottish Government are right not to suggest otherwise, for neither buying a body-stocking nor wearing it while listening to a CD of Katy Perry and playing *Grand Theft Auto* would make any difference to the published rate of cultural participation⁸⁹. Indeed significant portions of what can be understood as the Scottish Government's cultural policy supports practice that is not represented as contributing towards the assumed goal of one hundred percent cultural participation. For example, Hyslop's assertion that she has "*pressed the UK government for some years for tax break for computer games and high end television drama*" (2013) would result in no measurable change to the national indicator. Neither would the commitment in Creative Scotland's strategic plans to support TV production, fashion, digital technology and the games industry (Creative Scotland, 2014c, 2011a). It can only be assumed that these are supported for other reasons, given that although they can be spoken about within the field of cultural policy they are illegitimate solutions to the discursive problem of cultural non-participation.

3.2.6 The limitations of discursive practice

Such distinctions are also evident when analysing the policy interventions of the Scottish government that are intended to support and increase cultural participation. These actions can be understood as manifestations of the discursive practice of "*cultural provision*" that has been outlined above. They are indicative of both how the problem is understood and the type of opportunities for cultural participation that are seen as a legitimate solution. For example, despite "*enhancing the population's quality of life*" being a stated aim of cultural policy (Scottish Government, 2011a), and cultural participation rather than attendance being shown to be a more effective route to this end (Knell and

⁸⁹ The most commonly employed definition of the Creative Industries in the UK is that created by the DCMS that includes advertising; architecture; art and antiques; crafts; design; designer fashion; film; interactive leisure software; music; performing arts; publishing; software and computer services; and TV and radio; a list that would encompass a spectrum of potential activities far greater than that which are measured in the SHS.

Taylor, 2011, p.30), there is a preference to subsidise large scale professional organisations (Creative Scotland, 2011b; Scottish Government, 2011a), the primary output of which is opportunities for attendance and passive consumption. Furthermore, amongst the explicitly participative activities that are funded, distinctions are once again evident. For example, it is the provision of one year's free music tuition to all school children that receives by far the greatest monetary support (Scottish Government, 2011b). In the SHS, craftwork and creating computer animation may be classified as cultural participation, but the Scottish Government is not investing 8 million pounds a year⁹⁰ to facilitate children to undertake these activities.

Considering the 2012-13 Scottish Government draft budgets, of the 149.2 million pounds set aside for culture, 65% was to support the existence of 14 national bodies⁹¹ (Scottish Government, 2011a). Of the remaining 35%, distributed through Creative Scotland, the majority primarily funded a network of theatre companies, galleries, and venues in Edinburgh and Glasgow (Creative Scotland, 2012a). A pattern of distribution that has changed little under the new funding models brought in during 2015 (Creative Scotland, 2015i) and which mirrors the pattern that can be observed elsewhere in the UK (Warwick, 2015; Stark *et al.*, 2013; Jancovich, 2011; Selwood, 2001). Although each of these organisations is required to actively pursue the development of the broadest possible audience as part of their funding agreement (Creative Scotland, 2015h), the majority of the organisations receiving the bulk of public subsidy are those that the SHS appears to suggest are the least successful at providing access to opportunities for cultural participation. For example, the SHS shows that only 19% of people attend a play during the year, 4% attend the ballet, and 5% attend the opera (Scottish Government, 2009). There are far less (if any) explicit policy interventions to support participation with those potential

⁹⁰ As the Scottish Government did in the Youth Music Program.

⁹¹ The 14 national bodies are: National Galleries of Scotland, National Library of Scotland, National Museums Scotland, Scottish Library and Information Council, Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Scotland, Scottish Ballet, National Theatre of Scotland, Royal Scottish National Orchestra, Scottish Chamber Orchestra, Scottish Opera, Museums Galleries Scotland, National Mining Museum of Scotland, Scotland Fisheries Museum, Scottish Maritime Museum.

opportunities for cultural participation included in the SHS⁹² that are more successful in engendering participation, such as commercial cinema, pop music, club nights and line dancing.

Furthermore, despite Creative Scotland's stated objective of supporting those individuals who for various reasons struggle to access "*the arts, screen and creative industries*" (Creative Scotland, 2014c) there appears to be far less targeted work to support participation in the latter two. This is despite the common sense assumption that if living in a remote part of Scotland would limit someone's access to the Scottish Chamber Orchestra then it would equally limit his or her access to a Taylor Swift or Rolling Stones concert. Likewise, if a lack of disposable income would limit someone's ability to buy a ticket to the ballet, then their financial circumstances would have the same limiting factor on a whole host of other activities⁹³ considering that they might be equally, if not even more expensive⁹⁴. It would cost approximately £30 to £40 to take a family of four to the local multiplex, a cost that those targeted by cultural participation projects may certainly struggle to afford, but that may also be an increasing luxury for those who cultural participation policies are not intended to support⁹⁵. Just as Behr and Brennan (2014) have argued that with regards to cultural policy there are those forms of culture whose value is primarily only ever considered economically, there are equally those forms of cultural

⁹² The researcher is not suggesting that the choices of those in Government and the organisations that they support are less valid than the alternatives; indeed the researcher is a fan of much that receives public funding and is grateful that his own interests are subsidised to such a degree. Rather the point is to emphasise that preferences and distinctions do exist and do so in tension with the discourse of cultural abundance.

⁹³ There is equally the argument that these types of discussions should not be limited to any particular type of leisure time activity. Other forms of leisure time activities have become as, if not more unaffordable for many that would want to do them. As Jones notes "between 1990 and 2008 the average price of football tickets rose by 600%, well over seven times the rate of everything else" (2012, p.135), an activity that had previously been understood as a valuable social cohesive at a local community level was allowed to be transformed into a hobby for the more affluent controlled by the super-wealthy.

⁹⁴ For example the Rolling Stones tour in 2012 at which the cheapest ticket was £100 (Anon 2012).

⁹⁵ This is just the type of obscured inequality that Levitas (2005) argues the discourses surrounding the concept of inclusion masks. And this inequity is not only amongst those that are labelled as non-participants. Levitas (2004) has highlighted the increasing inequalities (economic, social and cultural) amongst those that are labelled as the included, and the same might be said about those who are understood as cultural participants.

participation whose economic inaccessibility is never considered as part of the problem construction of cultural non-participation. This is because what remains silent (Bacchi 2009) in the discourse of inadequate participation is the extent to which certain individuals may be faced with inequitable access to that which they want to participate with and which presumably they would therefore be keen to take up any opportunity offered to them.

It is clear that cultural participation policies are not intended to indiscriminately support individuals to overcome the barriers they face in pursuing the cultural participation about which they have an interest. Indeed for reasons that will be considered in due course, cultural policy interventions rarely start with an expression of desire by those that the intervention is supposedly intended to support. For example, one of the interviewees who worked in a geographic area of Edinburgh labelled as socially deprived, spoke of the extent to which they would often be inundated with offers from the major cultural organisations to come and work there. They felt it was clear that these major organisations had been given funds and charged with visiting specific areas, despite there being little demand for them amongst the people that this interviewee worked with. What the interviewee didn't understand was why that money wasn't given directly to the community to arrange the sort of events, organisations and opportunities for cultural participation that she found they *were* expressing a demand for.

3.2.7 For profit or not: A key binary

For all that some of the interviewees appeared keen not to suggest that participation with non-subsidised culture was of a lesser value, it was evident in all of the data generated that increasing participation in what was informally labelled as commercial culture was not understood as a legitimate solution to the problem of cultural non-participation. For this reason, the distinction between their own organisations and those that they described as commercial, or for-profit organisations, was a common feature of the interviews and a key binary (Bacchi, 2009) in the discursive logic of the problem construction.

It appeared that a commercial organisation is understood as one that receives no public subsidy and in which the maximization of profit is assumed to be the primary driver behind its existence. Therefore, it would seem that when it comes to providing access to opportunities for cultural participation, the legal structure and business model of the organisation matters significantly. The question appears not to be: could this organisation be supported or employed to increase cultural participation? But rather: is the organisation and its activities a legitimate site at which cultural participation can be acknowledged based on its primary source of revenue? For all that the metaphor of a cultural ecosystem/ecology is being employed elsewhere in cultural policy (see Holden 2015 for a useful discussion about the development of this term) within the discourse of inadequate participation and the related problem construction of cultural non-participation there remains a distinct focus on a specific subsidised ecosystem to the exclusion of the larger biome of which it is arguably a part⁹⁶.

This rejection of for-profit organisations was also evident in the practice of interviewees that was detailed in their responses. Although a few spoke of the benefits of working in partnership (see for example Interviewees 12 & 41), this was only ever in relation to other organisations receiving state subsidy. Only one interviewee⁹⁷ spoke of partnering with or even discussing the audiences of commercial organisations, and the example they gave was one of failure blamed upon the *“solely commercially focused producers”* with whom there was *“no way of working”*. The assumption appears to have been that the commercial theatre should have been willing to come and work with the subsidised organisation to support *their* activities, because it was the subsidised organisation that was legitimately able to deliver projects that would provide opportunities for cultural participation. There appeared to be no notion that the subsidised organisation could have worked to support the activities of the commercial

⁹⁶ An ecosystem is an interconnected network of abiotic (non-living) and biotic (living) factors while a biome is a collection of ecosystems with similar biotic and abiotic factors, arguably a more accurate metaphor for the full spectrum of cultural activities.

⁹⁷ Given that the discussion in this section may reveal which organisations are being discussed, in order to maintain anonymity throughout the rest of the thesis, the Interviewees in this paragraph have not been matched with their number.

theatre in order to increase cultural participation at their site. This despite the theatre having the most demographically diverse audience in Edinburgh and thus arguably their commercially focused aims managing to deliver greater audience diversity than the subsidised organisation was able to do with their outreach work.

When the researcher went to speak with the manager of the commercial theatre, the manager stated that they didn't feel theirs was seen as an organisation that was contributing towards increasing cultural participation, despite the diversity of their audience. No one from the Scottish Government or Creative Scotland had ever spoken to them about their audience in this way, and they doubted that those bodies were aware of some of the activities the theatre arranged outside of their main program in order to provide more opportunities for people to interact with the theatre. They also recognised that there was a great demand for their main program amongst people that were unable to afford the price of a ticket, however when the researcher suggested that subsidising these tickets for some would therefore be a highly effective manner of supporting cultural participation, the Interviewee laughed and responded with *"maybe, but they [the government] are never going to give money to a commercial organisation"*. Given the extent to which all manner of public services have been privatised since the 1980's, it is interesting to note that the involvement of private organisations in the provision of cultural participation opportunities is seen to be something unimaginable.

So the researcher began to put this question directly to the interviewees. If the Scottish Government wants to support people to participate with culture, and people are showing a desire to go to the cinema or a commercial pop concert, then should this not be supported as a guaranteed way to increase access to opportunities for cultural participation? While some appeared to recognise the logic of this suggestion, none of the interviewees felt that this would be an appropriate way for the state to intervene. Interviewee 41 spoke of it being *"a whole different ballgame when you look at the prices and barriers to*

commercial work, the difficulty is that part of the reason these shows are so spectacular is because of the budgets [...] so yeah it's incredibly sad, **just a shame really** [that some cannot afford them]". Indeed for Interviewee 4, supporting someone to participate with a for-profit cultural activity that they had never done before would "be **closing their opportunities down** rather than opening them up".

3.2.8 The discursive logic of public subsidy

And so it would appear that within the rules of this particular game of truth, it is only those activities and organisations receiving state subsidy that can be understood as providing legitimate sites at which the problem of cultural non-participation can be addressed:

*Well what I am thinking they mean is **things that they are putting money into**, so museums, us, you know, taking part in local dance classes, local activity* (Interviewee 2)

*But when we are talking about non-participation I think we are talking about the more formalised cultural element, probably **stuff that is getting public funding** because that is what we measure.* (Interviewee 6)

Interviewee 12 may have felt that "we should be giving people what they want culturally" but only if it could be offered in the context of the organisation in which they worked and in relation to the objects that the interviewee wanted to exhibit⁹⁸. Indeed any suggestion that public subsidy should end up going to organisations that were already able to make a profit was greeted as a clear contravention of the accepted notions of what public subsidy was primarily for (which appeared to be supporting that which was not commercially viable). This remained the case even if that subsidy would ultimately help to support people to participate with something about which they were interested and in so doing align with the Scottish Government's aim of encouraging participation:

⁹⁸ Likewise, in interviewing the manager of a nightclub that programmed live music and DJs it was interesting to note that while they failed to secure public subsidy on the basis that the acts they programmed were all commercial artists, one of those same artists was paid with public money to play the same set at a 'lates' event at a subsidised cultural organisation.

[Talking about audiences having more decision making power] *There is huge validity to saying to people, tell us what you want us to subsidise [...] It's really good in principle, that idea of service users, tenants, whatever ... are allowed to advocate for how they want to spend the money [...] it is then **how you can sustain a really successful arts scene in Scotland** if you then withdraw significant public funding from organisations to give to local authorities, to then open out these funds. The danger is that it is great for those that are proactive [...] organising to see the work they want to see, the hope being that it is in publicly funded buildings and not always commercial work, **that money would not be going into the arts in Scotland, it is going down to the bank accounts of the producers in London*** (Interviewee 41)

[In response to the suggestion that trips to multiplexes could be subsidised for those that can't afford the prices] *... I would baulk a little bit at **paying money to a corporation who are already making a huge amount of money...*** (Interviewee 7)

*Yes, **but those organisations are already making a profit...*** (Interviewee 22)

[When asked why people should not be supported to see mainstream feature films] *...lots and lots of people make lots and lots of money out of films, so **it's not an industry that anyone considers needs support...**because of the numbers who use it* (Interviewee 3)

[After stating that it would be fair to support people to go and see the things they were interested in but could not afford] *Ok, right... so I don't believe that.... That's a touring show, a big west end touring show, the reason it is so expensive is the production budgets are so high [...] **the very nature of that work that is commercial it is non subsidised. If that starts getting subsidised then the rest of us are up shit creek, you know*** (Interviewee 41)

The final quote is indicative of a distinct shift in logic that all the quotes exhibit. When their right to public subsidy is brought into question, the objective of supporting cultural participation becomes secondary to the objective of supporting those organisations with which the majority of the population is

least likely to participate. It is a distinction about the assumed purpose of public subsidy that was also evident in ACE's *Arts Debate* (2008). While the public stated that relevance and diversity of the offer should be the priority, many artists and those working in arts organisations appear to perceive, like the interviewees in the current study, that subsidy is first and foremost about supporting artistic practice, in particular supporting practice that may struggle to be viable in an open market. As Oakley (2014) argues, there are certain practices⁹⁹ that are assumed should always be protected from the ravages of the market, primarily on the basis that their value is maintained or increased through doing so. As such, the majority of interviewees believed that any access agenda those receiving public subsidy are required to support should be about trying to diversify the audience that would be interested in the type of work that those receiving subsidy want to produce.

These two positions encapsulate the arguably irreconcilable orientations to cultural policy – access and artistic excellence. What Lee *et.al.* describe as “the age old tension at the heart of arts funding” (2011, p.295) and both of which are neatly encompassed in Fiona Hyslop's description of what she believed it was government's job to do in relation to culture in Scotland

*It is our job, however, to create the conditions which **enable artists to flourish and as many people, groups and organisations as possible to benefit from and enjoy our culture and heritage*** (2013)

It was a tension that was also picked up by one of the interviewees involved in making funding decisions: “*I see us as always serving two constituencies. One is the sector, artists and organisations, and the other is public value and how you get to that articulation of public value*”. However there is an asymmetric power relationship between these two constituencies, for although Holden (2010) argues that cultural policy (and thus cultural subsidy) is implicitly understood to be about product rather than people, this is not strictly true. There are

⁹⁹ Oakley (2014) specifically refers to the distinction between popular and high culture.

arguably some people to whom the current approach to cultural policy is strongly orientated: those individuals who exert significant influence over the products that are created and the organisations that the dissemination of these products requires.

Such asymmetric power relationships are evident in Creative Scotland's description of their Open Project Fund, described as intended to support "*the arts, screen and creative industries, with projects that help them explore, realise and develop their creative potential, **widen access to their work***" (Creative Scotland, 2015d). The expected pattern of events implicit in this description is that certain individuals decide what work they want to do; they then seek money from the state to do this; and in return are expected to use this work to address the problem of cultural non-participation. As such, decisions about how supporting everyone to have a "*rich cultural life*" (Hyslop, 2013) might best be achieved are therefore constrained by *a priori* decisions about what has been funded and what those that receive funding are interested in doing. As Interviewee 21 stated: "*the national indicators don't concern me so much, what concerns me is how to take **what the organisation does** and make it available to people who wouldn't normally have access to it*". Likewise, Interviewee 30 felt that most of the organisations that they worked with in the sector were not all that interested in policy objectives, their primary focus was in making the work that they wanted to and that they "*did*" cultural participation only because it was required in order to get money. Supporting cultural participation therefore becomes a question of increasing participation with that which receives subsidy, leading to an implication that participation with these subsidised activities and organisations offers something distinct from that which can be gained through participation elsewhere. As Chapter 2 has outlined, there is a wealth of research that either explicitly or implicitly supports this assumption.

The question of whether cultural policy is primarily about professionals or the public is one that has not been satisfactorily considered¹⁰⁰ (Gray, 2000) and it appears to be assumed that the same policy intervention will always deliver for both constituencies. However supporting the production of that which may otherwise struggle to be economically viable is not necessarily the best way in which to support those whose social and economic deprivation restricts their capacity to have the freedom to make choices about how to spend their time in the same way that others do. For all the talk of evidence based policy making, there appears to be no evidence required to decide on what type of subsidised organisations or policy intervention will *most effectively* increase cultural participation, irrespective of where that cultural participation is taking place.

Summary

Focusing on the data generated through policy texts and qualitative interviews, this chapter has outlined the two dominant discourses of cultural participation that are evident in the field of cultural policy. In one there was an abundance of culture with which one might participate, increasing levels of interaction with the creative industries was lauded as something positive, and digital participation was seen to have significantly contributed to the multiplicity of ways in which one might be seen to be participating. In the other, there was a deficit of opportunities for cultural participation, culture was a more rarefied range of activities around which distinctions and hierarchies continued to exist, and in which it was acceptable to question or even dismiss certain activities as not being valid forms of cultural participation at all. It was within this second discourse, that of inadequate participation, that the problem of non-participation is constructed.

¹⁰⁰ The tensions between these dual purposes arguably extend back to the inception of the Arts Council and the beginning of explicit public subsidy for the arts. Two of the most prominent figures in CEMA had divergent views on what was most important to support. While Dr Thomas Jones prioritised the local, amateur and touring of work, John Maynard Keynes felt the focus should be supporting the production of excellence at a professional level and then creating demand for these outputs. It was Keynes that won and the legacy of this approach has meant that the balance has forever been tipped in favour of supply irrespective of demand (Sinclair, 1995).

The problem is constructed as one of market failure, in that there is a certain type of experience that some people are having a suboptimal degree of exposure to because of various barriers that are preventing them from doing so. The state is therefore represented as addressing this market failure through the provision of opportunities to participate that take the shape of state subsidised organisations and activities. Those receiving subsidy then undertake a practice of removing barriers that is discursively understood as appropriate and necessary. An important part of the discursive logic of the problem is that it cannot be addressed through removing barriers to participation with for-profit cultural organisations and activities, but only through removing barriers to not-for-profit organisations and activities that rely on some degree of state subsidy. Implicit in this logic is that the value of participation with a state subsidised organisation or activity is in some way greater than that which could occur elsewhere.

While Chapter 2 has outlined the type of research that provides objectivity to this problem construction, the existence of non-participation is only *affirmed* by cultural participation surveys like the SHS and the associated research that seeks to explain their findings. The *idea* of cultural non-participation both precedes this research and exists independent of it. As such, Chapter 4 will now move on to consider the genealogy of the problem construction through undertaking a historical analysis of the point at which the possibility of cultural non-participation became imaginable and with it the subject identity of the cultural non-participant was established.

Chapter 4 – The genealogy of the problem construction

Thus far the discussion has primarily focused on making visible the discursive logics of the problem construction. Chapter 2 has detailed the manner in which cultural participation has been constructed as an object of enquiry and the various explanations that have been offered as to why differing patterns of cultural participation exist. Moving the focus onto the discursive planes of politics and professional practice, Chapter 3 has argued that while there are two dominant discourses of cultural participation, it is within the discourse of inadequate participation that certain patterns of cultural participation are represented as a problem requiring state intervention. However, as Foucault notes, for a problematisation to have formed, something prior “must have happened to make it uncertain, to make it lose its familiarity, or to have provoked a certain number of difficulties about it” (2003a [1984], p.24).

It is for this reason that Foucault’s approach to the studying discourse is a historical one, and he describes it as undertaking a history of the present (2002 [1966]). It is not historical in the sense of looking back to compare the present to a more or less favourable past, but rather in the sense of identifying the point at which a certain practice became problematic and the conditions under which this occurred. Foucault calls this approach genealogy and it is centred around an analysis of the conditions under which the possibility of certain relations are established and maintained (1977). The intention is to gain a greater understanding of practices as they exist today by “seeking the conditions that have made these practices possible and have established the grounds on which they depend for their intelligibility, [through reflecting on] the contingent pathways along which the taken for granted possibilities and limits of our present have come into existence” (Rabinow and Rose, 2003, p.xiii). It is such a task that the following chapter undertakes and in doing so it specifically addresses research question 4 - What is the genealogy of this problem construction? While also beginning to address research question 5 - What subjects are constructed within the problem?

4.1 The institution of the Arts

As has been discussed in Chapters 2 and 3, with regards to the problem of cultural non-participation there is a significant synonymy between culture and the arts. As such, to understand the genealogy of cultural non-participation as a problem, one must consider in greater detail the point at which the arts were constructed as a distinct field of human practice. However, to do so one must first replace the common concern with defining what the arts are, with the more fundamental question of what the arts is, an answer to which will be proposed in the first part of this chapter.

4.1.1 The discursive relationship between cultural participation and the arts

It is important to remember that although this research is analysing the construction of a problem within *cultural* policy, this is a fairly recent description for what would have been understood throughout the majority of the twentieth century in the UK as *arts* policy:

Whereas the arts traditionally encompassed cultural practices that were cosseted by social elites (largely through the practices of direct and indirect patronage from private and/or state benefactors), the re-definition of arts policy as cultural policy in the second half of the twentieth century sought to remove the elitist tag from traditional arts and include forms of cultural practice that had broad popular appeal (Craik, 2007, p.26).¹⁰¹

¹⁰¹ While Craik is specifically considering an Australian perspective, the same shift can be seen to have happened in the UK. While the Westminster ministerial post with responsibility for policy in this area was, up until 2005, referred to as the Minister for the Arts¹⁰¹ it was changed to the Minister for Culture under New Labour at the same time as they established the Department for Culture, Media and Sport. Likewise in Scotland, where the language of New Labour was primarily adopted with little alteration (Schlesinger, 2009b), the responsible minister gained a titular association with culture rather than the arts (other than a brief period between 2001 and 2002 when both terms were included).

For all that cultural policy may rhetorically orientate itself towards a broader scope of activities, “the lobbyists for cultural policy have largely come from the arts sector and focused on familiar art forms as strategies to enhance cultural development” (Craik, 2007, p.29). As Interviewee 13 stated: “*there is clearly an agenda to show that as many people as possible are participating so they are going to keep the definition of culture very, very wide however the rhetoric coming out of Creative Scotland is still very much about the arts*”. This may explain why, despite asking questions about cultural participation, in all of the data generated the researcher was consistently faced with an implied synonymy between participation with culture and participation with the arts:

*We actively support the case for the public subsidy of **the arts**. We understand **that culture and heritage** have a value in and of itself”* (Hyslop, 2013)

*...what I believe in is that **art, well culture**, is about learning and enlightenment, so if we want a twenty first century nation that is articulate, and I don’t mean literally, or literary articulacy, is able to, to be open and expressive and connected then it is absolutely essential that you **participate in culture** and that this is supported.* (Interviewee 14)

*I would like to believe that there are people high up in government who are real advocates for **the arts and culture**... and that they really understand it, and know that **it** enriches all of our lives and if you imagine a world without **culture**, then that would be pretty awful and dull, I mean you get it on a basic level...I think people do have that thing about cuts to **arts funding**, it’s like, why should we fund **the arts**? We should give all the money to hospitals and things like that, but actually, you know, I would hope that there is someone really high up in government that really understands and believes that **participation in culture** is a really good thing, but it is not always the case. I mean when you get down to certain councils, I mean **the arts** aren’t a statutory service and so they are often the thing that gets culled, but I think it is a good thing that **culture** is up there...* (Interviewee 12)

*We have been fortunate that **the arts** have remained important [for government] because it is that big question about **why is culture***

*important, why should people be **engaging with culture*** (Interviewee 41).¹⁰²

References to the arts were prolific across all of the data generated and while it was often used as a synonym for culture it was also clear that the arts was understood as an entity in its own right. This was clearly evident in the choice of pronoun and the manner in which Interviewee 21 refers to the arts as a single object that can, amongst other things, be run, loved, committed to and defended:

*...the **people who run the arts love the arts** and they are therefore completely committed to it, and it is therefore a lifelong ambition and mission to bring everybody into it.*

Indeed for all of the interviewees, the term referred to something tangible enough that it could readily be employed as the subject of a clause, the object of a verb and something to which agency could be apportioned. Indeed a number of interviewees saw this object as being specifically that which the government wanted to increase the populations' participation with and thus the difference between talking about cultural participation in the abstract and talking about cultural participation in terms of policy objectives:

*Yeah, yeah that's another thing, I guess when I am talking about that I am talking about **the arts** in general, you know...* (Interviewee 3)

*I would imagine that they [The Scottish Government] are talking about **the arts**.* (Interviewee 12)

*... is what they [The Scottish Government] are asking is what **arts** things do you participate in?* (Interviewee 26)

*There is huge value in engaging with **the arts**, it is having that in your life I suppose.* (Interviewee 38)

Interviewer: If somebody asked you about your cultural participation, what would you tell them?

¹⁰² See Appendix 1.08 for further relevant examples from the data.

*Interviewee 16: As in how do I take part in **the arts**?*

Given that in summarising her aspirations for cultural policy in Scotland, Fiona Hyslop stated that she wanted “*more people to experience more **art***” (2013) the responses of the interviewees appear to share her understanding of what it is that the government wants to increase participation with. As Interviewee 27 said when the researcher pointed out the difficulty of defining cultural participation: “*there is not the luxury of time to dance on the pinhead that is the definition of culture [given that] most understood that **what was meant by the term was the arts***”. It appeared that Jensen was correct when she argued that there existed a “shared presumption of something called art with great social power” (2002, p.77). For all that culture is consistently lauded as a broad-brush panacea for every social ill and economic difficulty¹⁰³ or celebrated for its economic contribution to GDP, when it comes to a question of supporting participation with culture via the distribution of public subsidy, culture reverts to something called the arts.

4.1.2 Understanding the Arts as an institution

There are doubtless those who would argue that cultural participation policies cannot only be intended to increase participation with the arts because – as was discussed in Chapter 3 - public subsidy supports a range of activities that go beyond the canonical taxonomy of opera, ballet, etc. that would be commonly associated with this term. Indeed given the discussion that has already been offered in the previous chapter, it is reasonable to suggest that when the interviewees referred to the arts, they were not referring solely to such a narrow range of activities. But this is to misunderstand what the arts is, to think that it is reducible to a fixed list of activities by once again focusing on that to which the label can be applied rather than considering the label as an object in its own right. As such, the necessity for the label is not brought into question and any debate tends to focus on asking what *are* the arts rather than what *is*

¹⁰³ As Bennett (2002, cited in Belfiore and Bennett, 2007a p.226) has noted, it is hard to think of another area of policy with quite such an extensive assortment of expectations about its positive impacts.

the arts? In attempting to answer the question of what art is, Carey suggests that “the answer cannot lie in the physical attributes of the object” for any attempt to understand art in this way can be “thwarted at every turn and indefinitely” (2005, p.29). It is the suggestion of this thesis that a similar position should be taken when attempting to understand what ‘the arts’ is. As such, the manner in which it has been understood in the context of this research will be outlined, below.

The ACE study, entitled *The Arts Debate*, found some of their participants perceived an ontological difference between art and the arts:

It appears that members of the public have a narrower view of ‘the arts’ than of ‘art’. The arts are perceived as a smaller set of clearly defined and more traditional activities – theatre, ballet, art galleries. For many people ‘art’ is part of the fabric of their lives, while ‘the arts’ are something institutional, and separate from their day-to-day experience of the world (Arts Council England, 2008, p.13)

It seems that many see the arts as something institutional, and although in the case of *The Arts Debate* this appears to have been interpreted as meaning that they see it as something taking place within an organisation, as shall become clear this is not the conception of the institution that has been employed in the present research. Although the terms cultural organisation and cultural institution are often used interchangeably, distinctions can be made between an institution and an organisation that are valuable to evoke in the context of the current discussion. Broadly speaking, institutions can be understood as “conventions that are self-policing” (Phillips *et al.*, 2004, p. 638) or as Turner suggests:

A complex of positions, roles, norms and values lodged in particular types of social structures and organising relatively stable patterns of human activity with respect to fundamental problems in producing life-

sustaining resources, in reproducing individuals, and in sustaining structures within a given environment (1997, p.6).

Institutions are a specific system of values, agents, actions and meanings that set limitations on how certain social activity can be understood and spoken about. They can be distinguished both from less organised social forms, such as rituals and events, and more complex social forms such as a culture, community or society (Kangas and Vestheim, 2010). While the former may be a constituent element of institutions, institutions can be understood as a constituent element of the latter. Institutions can be identified in the “stable, valued and recurring patterns of behaviour” (Huntington, 1965, p.394) that they produce, and as such individual organisations can be understood as the materialised expression of an institution (Kangas and Vestheim, 2010). However no organisation by itself is complete or complex enough to be an institution in its own right:

The relationship between an institution and an organisation can be summed up as an issue of the opposites between the general, the abstract, and the complete on one hand (institution) and the specific and the concrete on the other (organisation). In other words: An organisation is a social and empirical representation or realization of the concept of institution. Typically, quite many organisations can be subsumed under one institution. (Kangas and Vestheim, 2010, p.271)

In their paper on institutions and cultural policy Kangas & Vestheim recognise the extent to which institutions function as a system of social structuring that governs both the behaviour of individuals and how their behaviour is understood. In so doing they identify the institutions of cultural policy as specific collections of organisations (museums, libraries, theatres etc.) to be understood in isolation from each other. Indeed, in his seminal study on museums, Bennett has argued that such cultural organisations can be perceived as “technologies of behavioural management [...] that aim at regulating the conduct of individuals and populations” (1995, pp.89–90). While this researcher

agrees with that assertion, they would go further in arguing that such organisations are part of a single dispositive and as such must be considered as component parts of a single institution – the Arts – that in turn is a significant constituent part of the manner in which power is exercised, values are distributed and asymmetric power relationships are maintained in UK society. Just as the Church can be understood as a single institution composed of multiple types of organisations of various size and function, so too is the Arts in this study¹⁰⁴.

4.1.3 Institutions and discourse

While much art is understood as a part of the Arts, when speaking of the Arts, not only does one invoke many more types of human activity but also a complex network of objects, agents, organisations and practices all of which exist in a dialectical relationship. While the concept of an art world¹⁰⁵ (Becker, 2008 [1982]; Thornton, 2008) captures the physical components of these institutional relationships, it does not satisfactorily capture the interplay between these physical networks and the discursive structures into which they must be taken if they are to have any meaning. Likewise, while Shiner (2001), Bourdieu (1996) and Staniszewski (1995) have all described some variation of what Shiner describes as a system of art, this continues to give art an ontological primacy that their own argument would appear to refute. For both art worlds and art systems are represented as “networks of artists, critics, audiences, and others who share a common field of interest along with a commitment to certain values, practices and institutions [organisations]” (Shiner, 2001, p.11). This

¹⁰⁴ Accepting its limitations as a communicative tool, capitalisation has been employed to make clear the distinction that is being made between art and the Arts. While the former is understood as referring to an object such as a painting, or sculpture intended to be valued for its visual qualities rather than a utilitarian purpose, the latter refers to the discursive institution under discussion.

¹⁰⁵ The idea of an art world was fundamental in the research presented in Howard S. Becker’s seminal book *Art Worlds* (2008 [1982]). Becker presents art as a product of collective action in which an object is art if people say that it is, albeit that those groups of people who constitute the art world wield greater influence in making these pronouncements. However, both Becker (2008 [1982]) and Davies (2001) suggest there is no single art world, but rather multiple independently operating worlds, “a loose network of overlapping subcultures held together by a belief in art” (Thornton, 2008, p.xi). Becker’s recommendation is for research to forgo trying to define art absolutely and instead to observe how art worlds make these distinctions themselves.

gives too little consideration to both the dispositive of which all art worlds and art systems are a part, and the discursive logic that binds the components of the dispositive together – analogous to what Thornton calls “the belief in art” (2008). For it is this dispositive, its discursive structure, and the concomitant games of truth (Foucault, 1985) that it engenders that are all normatively accepted as inevitable and necessary.

As such, it is the idea of an institution as it is understood within discourse theory that has been employed within the current study, for as Phillips *et al.* have argued, institutions can be understood as “social constructions constituted through discourse” (2004, p.638, see also Parker, 1992; Kress 1995). However as the extract below indicates, their conception of discourse overlooks the extent to which the action is equally constituted through the discourse with which it is institutionalised:

...the tendency among institutional theorists has been to define the concept of institution in terms of patterns of action, whereas we believe institutions are constituted through discourse and that it is not action per se that provides the basis for institutionalization but, rather, the texts that describe and communicate those actions. It is primarily through texts that information about actions is widely distributed and comes to influence the actions of others. Institutions, therefore, can be understood as products of the discursive activity that influences actions. (Phillips *et al.*, 2004, p.635)

Going further, Fairclough presents institutions as a fully conceived order of discourse that is “simultaneously facilitating and constraining the social action of its members: it provides them with a frame for action, without which they could not act, but it thereby constrains them to act within that frame” (1995, p.38). This far more dialectical relationship between regulative normative concepts (creation, genius, aesthetic etc.), identities, (artists, actors, critics, audience etc.), practices (painting, performing, composing, outreach etc.)

organisations (orchestras, festivals, museums, etc.) and discourses (participation, excellence, creative industries, etc.) brings the concept of an institution far closer to that of the dispositive and it is in this manner that the institution has been understood for the purpose of this research¹⁰⁶.

To understand the Arts in such a manner is not without precedent. In particular, Arthur Danto and George Dickie are credited with formalising the idea of an institutional theory of art. Danto was primarily focused on exploring the construction of art through what he identifies as artistic theory, arguing that “to see something as art requires something the eye cannot descry – an atmosphere of artistic theory, a knowledge of the history of art: an artworld” (1964, p.47). Dickie, who formulated these ideas more explicitly, specifically focused on the social structures in which the theory was made and maintained. In this sense, he saw a work of art in the classificatory sense as “1) an artefact 2) upon which some person or persons acting on behalf of a certain social institution (the artworld) has conferred the status of candidate for appreciation” (1971, p.101), what Danto referred to as the power of conferring ‘arthood’ on an object (1964). Dickie’s institutional theory of art does not argue that there are a narrow group of people intentionally executing explicit institutionalising power, but rather that there is a network of people employing the same body of knowledge and system of meaning to imbue certain objects and actions with value (Jelinek, 2013), what Howarth describes as a discursive coalition (2010). As Staniszewski notes:

When an artist creates a work of Art it has no intrinsic use or value; but when this artwork circulates within the systems of Art (galleries, art histories, art publications, museums and so on) it acquires a depth of meaning, breadth of importance, and increase in value that is greater

¹⁰⁶ While institutions may be discursively constituted, not everything that is discursively constituted can be understood as an institution. For what they lack are the “self-regulating, socially constructed mechanisms that enforce their application” (Jepperson, 1991, cited in Phillips *et al.*, 2004). While all discourses make certain thoughts and actions ‘possible’ and others less possible or even detrimental, where the “sanctions are sufficiently robust, an institution exists” (Phillips *et al.*, 2004, p.638).

proportionately than perhaps anything else in the modern world. (1995, p.28)

However what this institutional theory of art does not sufficiently consider is its historical emergence as a contingent body of knowledge, and with it the construction of specific types of subject to which claims could be made about their relationship to art as an object. In so doing it focuses solely on how the discourses of the institution write upon the objects that are labelled as art. And as such fails to consider the extent to which the same discourses are part of the technologies of the self, “the intellectual and practical instruments and devices enjoined upon human beings to shape and guide their ways of being human” (Foucault, 2003b [1982], p.146).

4.2 The discursive construction of the Arts

In order to understand how the Arts acts as a technology of the self and in so doing is integral to the way in which power is exercised and asymmetric power relationships maintained in the field of cultural policy, it is important to consider some of the core components of its institutional discourses. The next section of this chapter sets out to do just this. Beginning with a discussion about the point at which the institution was constituted, it goes on to focus on the specific assertions made about a unique aesthetic experience and the moralising capacities that this experience was claimed to afford.

4.2.1 The constitution of the Arts as an institution

Institutions are not eternal and transcendent, they are the product of a particular time (Phillips *et al.*, 2004) and in order to reflect on when the institution of the Arts was initially constituted it is worth returning once again to Creative Scotland’s strategic plan that includes a request for the reader to indulge their imagination:

Artists, creative people and organisations change lives and unlock new futures. Art and creativity offer meaning to people’s lives in many different ways. We only have to imagine a world without books, music, art and

design, dance, theatre and films to realise how fundamental creativity is to all our lives. (Creative Scotland, 2014c, p.48)¹⁰⁷

While creativity is unquestionably required to produce books, music, dance etc. it is also required to make soup, cars, flint knives and lava lamps. The fundamental nature of creativity to human existence is fairly self-evident. But creativity is not offered in isolation here, it is implicitly related to the Arts, artists and creative people, with an oblique suggestion that all of them would be required to retain a world with books, music and dance. However for all that media commentators such as Joyce McMillan of the *Scotsman* may, in decrying the latest funding cut or ‘managerialist blunder’, employ this same imagery of what a world without the Arts would be like (Stevenson, 2014), one need only travel back a few centuries to find this very point in history. Upon doing so, one would find that a world without the Arts is not a world without culture, or indeed art. As many authors note (Belfiore and Bennett, 2010; Carey, 2005; Murray, 1997; Shiner, 2001) , for the largest part of human history there was no notion of the Arts as an independent concept as is now understood:

The word art is derived from the Latin *ars* and the Greek *techne*, which meant any human skill whether horse breaking, verse writing, shoe making, vase painting, or governing. The opposite of art in that older way of thinking was not craft but nature (Shiner, 2001, p.5)

Not only did art and creativity exist before public subsidy, but also before the Arts. To suggest otherwise is disingenuous. While some could argue that all that was absent was a word, there is little evidence that before the eighteenth century any society categorised certain practice in a manner that would be analogous to the modern category of the Arts (Shiner, 2001; Dissanayake, 1998; Murray, 1997; Kristeller, 1990 [1950]; Nussbaum, 1986; Tatarkiewicz, 1970). In

¹⁰⁷ A similar thought experiment was encouraged by Interviewee 12 who suggested that if one were to “*imagine a world without culture, then that [world] would be pretty awful and dull*”. Likewise, this argument forms the abstract of a literature review into the value of the arts (Spencer-Oatey *et al.*, 2013).

fact a time machine is not even required. There remain those individuals and communities relatively untouched by the European intellectual tradition, and therefore for whom the Arts do not exist. And yet this does not appear to have limited their capacity to live, or to produce cultures that many in Europe are keen to explore. In short, the Arts is not essential or immutable and thus neither is participation with it. Both rely upon a social system of meaning that is a historical inheritance from a specific period in time.

Building on the work of Kristeller (1990) in what he describes as a brief history of the idea of art, Shiner (2001) argues that the category of the Arts as it is understood today is a modern European invention established in the eighteenth century when the “cult of art” and the “inflated, quasi-religious rhetoric that goes with it” came into existence (2001, p.137):

[a]rt as we have generally understood it is a European invention barely two hundred years old. It was preceded by a broader, more utilitarian system of art that lasted over two thousand years [...] Yet like so much that emerged from the Enlightenment, the European idea of fine art was believed to be universal (Shiner, 2001, p.3)

He proposes that its emergence and consolidation was the result of a convergence of social, institutional and intellectual changes that occurred in three stages over a period of around one hundred and fifty years:

...an initial one from around 1680 to 1750 during which many elements of the modern system of art that had emerged piecemeal since the late middle ages began to be more closely integrated; a second and crucial one from around 1750 to 1800 that definitively separated art from craft, artist from artisan, and the aesthetic from other modes of experience; and a final stage of consolidation and elevation, from around 1800 to 1830, during which the term ‘art’ began to signify an autonomous

spiritual domain, the artistic vocation was sanctified, and the concept of the aesthetic began to replace taste. (Shiner, 2001, p.75)

It is an argument that has also been made by others including Woodmansee (1994), Mortensen (1997) and Carey (2005). While Shiner focuses on the establishment of a distinct category of “the fine arts” and its “conceptual and institutional separation from the contexts of use and everyday pleasure” (2001, p.140) the systems of meaning that he associates with it are those that still provide the intellectual and discursive framework for the Arts today. As he acknowledges, by the nineteenth century the adjective ‘fine’, was already regularly dropped without any loss of meaning. And so, while the modifier may have entirely vanished by virtue of obsolescence, when one speaks of the Arts it evokes the discourses upon which the fine arts were established. These discourses were then retrospectively applied to understanding the activities of previous eras as one of the tactics by which a new system of knowledge is ultimately represented as a universal and eternal truth (Danaher *et al.*, 2000). It is to a discussion of the key discursive logics of this institutional discourse that this chapter now turns.

4.2.2 The Arts and the aesthetic experience

The Arts is discursively constructed as “something that exists beyond particular societies and belongs to the subject of, what might be called for want of a better phrase, ‘humanity in general’” (Mirza, 2012, pp.28–29). Yet despite this, the ability to interact with the Arts so as to gain some benefit is not something that humanity in general is assumed to naturally possess. Rather the ability to have an interaction with the Arts is presented as a learnt sensibility that must be both cultivated and mediated. Central to this is the notion of the aesthetic as a specific type of experience (Belfiore and Bennett, 2010; Shiner, 2001) and which simultaneously describes a unique kind of pleasure (or in the case of Adorno and Horkheimer the intense refusal of pleasure (1986 [1944])). The assertion that the Arts afforded such a unique experience, one separate from mere utility or entertainment, is one about which “[p]eople in the West have

been saying things [...] for two and a half centuries” (Carey, 2005, p.32) but which has also been critiqued for the manner in which it “masks and perpetuates certain very definite relations of power” (Connor, 1992, p.13).

Alexander Baumgarten originally coined the term ‘aesthetic’ as a description of what he believed to be the appropriate response to the ‘sensate discourse’ of poetry (Shiner, 2001). He proposed aesthetics as a new philosophical discipline that would be a science of sensual recognition or as De Bolla paraphrases “a general enquiry into how we come to know the world from the evidence of our senses” (2002, p.9 cited in Belfiore and Bennett, 2010). It was a concept that developed “in keeping with the idea, spelled out by Kant and Schiller¹⁰⁸, according to which aesthetic experience is a specific sphere of experience which invalidates the ordinary hierarchies incorporated in everyday sensory experience” (Rancière, 2005, p.15) and which ultimately became “a self-legitimizing realm [...] that submits to no external principle of restraint or regulation but is all the more effective for that as a model of the interiorisation of authority in bourgeois society” (Connor, 1992, p.34).

The study of the aesthetic developed into an entire discipline and one that there is neither the space nor necessity to survey here. However it is important to note that there are those who have questioned if such a thing as an aesthetic experience exists in the real:

Firstly it is hard to identify a feature or quality that is characteristic of and essential to what we, in common speech, refer to as the artistic experience (a quality, in other words, that makes the aesthetic experience unique, thus distinguishing it from moral, religious and all other possible types of experiences). Secondly the concept of ‘experience’ cannot be properly qualified by the connotation of being ‘aesthetic’, on account of the fact that an experience is not an object or a physical thing

¹⁰⁸ And also developed by the likes of Hegel and Schopenhauer.

that can have or possess qualities (Belfiore and Bennett, 2007a, p.228 citing Mitias, 1998, pp.1-4)

Of those that believe an aesthetic experience is possible, a number of debates are on-going. While some have located the aesthetic at the level of the observable attributes of the object, others have understood the distinction in cultural or psychological terms (see Belfiore & Bennett 2007a for an overview of these debates). Further debate also exists about whether, if there is such an experience, it is ever knowable by any other than the individual who has experienced it. Drawing extensively on studies in the physical sciences, Carey (2005) argues that because any experience is subjective and the judgement based on feelings, the answer to that question is no. Belfiore and Bennett are more hopeful, and “reject the proposition that the aesthetic experience irrevocably belongs to a realm of the unknowable” (2007a, p.262). Although given the evidence currently available it appears that it remains knowable in the same way that distant planets are knowable - primarily because of the distortions they cause in something about which we have a far greater degree of knowledge and capacity to observe¹⁰⁹.

However for all the debates that exist about the nature of an aesthetic experience and the capacity for it to be known, observed or understood, the case remains that the notion of some kind of unique experience is integral to the modern conception of the Arts. For example, Brown and Novak-Leonard define the aesthetic experience as being “what happens to individuals as they see, hear, and feel art¹¹⁰” (2013, p.224) while Belfiore and Bennett (2007a) acknowledge the degree to which aesthetic experience and artistic experience can be employed synonymously¹¹¹. The idea that the Arts offers access to a unique experience was also evident in the data of this study such as when Interviewee

¹⁰⁹ A belief in the existence of the aesthetic experience in the field of cultural policy tends to be assumed on the basis of studies that seek to identify its impact in some manner.

¹¹⁰ Their definition of art being “dance, theatre, music, film and the visual arts” (p.229) which has been encountered within particular contexts and delivered by professional organisations and practitioners.

¹¹¹ Although they acknowledge in their endnotes that in a purist etymological sense everything has the potential to be aesthetic.

14 tried to express the impact that the sort of work they did could have, by arguing that *“the thing that joins both of those activities together is the art, **the experience of the art**”*. For all that Rancière may argue that the autonomy of the aesthetic experience should not be confused with the autonomy of art (2005), discursively, the Arts and the aesthetic are bound together so strongly that the capacity for someone to lay claim to an aesthetic experience without being written upon by the discourses of the Arts is extremely difficult.

4.2.3 The Arts as an autonomous and self-contained realm of activity

Fundamental to Kant’s conception of the appropriate response to art was the concept of disinterestedness¹¹² and the related distinction between the aesthetic experience and the utilitarian experiences of daily life. He described the former as a harmonious free play between the imagination (precepts) and understanding (concepts) because without the usual utilitarian requirements to define or conclude, the two were free to whirl in pleasurable harmony (Kant, cited in Shiner, 2001, p.147). He also conceived that those objects most likely to stimulate this harmonious dance were those, the form of which exhibited purposiveness without a purpose, by which he meant those forms that appear to have been purposefully made but with no clear purpose or use. As part of his thesis, Kant also took the older understanding of art as any type of human production, as opposed to that which was produced by nature, and began to divide it up into different forms. First he divided the mechanical arts from the liberal arts before dividing the liberal arts themselves into two. On one hand there were the agreeable arts aimed at the ordinary pleasures of recreation¹¹³ and on the other there were the fine arts with which disinterested interaction would afford the higher pleasures of aesthetic reflection. While it was beauty

¹¹² Challenging a Kantian belief in the necessity for disinterested observation on the part of the participant, participatory practice (Bishop, 2006) has been increasingly employed as a strategy to increase public engagement (Schrag 2015). This builds on a trend that initially began in the late nineteenth century and that Belfiore and Bennett, citing Berleant (1991), describes as the rise of the idea of experiential continuity and according to which an active engagement between the perceiver and the art object is central to the aesthetic experience (Belfiore and Bennett, 2007a, p.230). As such, interaction between artist, art and audience (for want of a better word) has become an increasingly prevalent feature of the Arts, though it has manifested itself in different ways in different manifestations of the Arts.

¹¹³ Kant offers storytelling, a well-furnished table or music at a banquet as example for this.

and not fine art¹¹⁴ that was initially the common factor, over time the focus on beauty was stretched by the notion of the sublime and eventually both were displaced with the idea of an autonomous and self-contained realm of activity that would ultimately be known as the Arts. Not only had a distinct category of the Arts been constructed and discursively separated from the contexts of use and everyday pleasure, but this also resulted in a similar separation of an experience with the Arts from other kinds of experience that one might have.

4.2.4 The moralising capacities of an aesthetic experience

Yet the exact extent to which the Arts existed as a realm wholly distinct from the everyday has always been unclear. While for some it served as an escape from the mundane and material realities of the everyday, for others it provides a transcendent tool that should be employed to serve society. While debates about the instrumentalisation of the Arts have tended to frame this as a more recent phenomenon (for an example of work on this topic see: Gilmore, 2012; Nisbett, 2012; Belfiore, 2012; Mirza, 2009, 2012; Orr, 2008; Gibson, 2008), in actuality, debate about the degree to which the Arts should be explicitly involved in the moral improvement of society have been on-going since its discursive construction. When art was understood more broadly as a product of human creativity, one of its many functions could be the didactic instruction of the populace. However by the eighteenth century, writers such as Adam Smith and David Hume were arguing that the only purpose of the Arts (as it now was) was the pleasure intrinsic to it (Barrell, 1986). This was not to say that the Arts could not have a moralising effect on society (Bennett, 1995), only that the effect should not have been intended but rather an indirect benefit of having had the unique aesthetic experience that an interaction with it offered. For example, Schiller conceived of it as a redemptive experience of a higher truth that had the capacity to restore the lost unity between the sensual and the spiritual that had stripped mankind of its dignity. While this restoration may

¹¹⁴ Initially Kant highlighted oratory and landscape gardening as objects suitable for aesthetic contemplation, works of craft could also be considered if their use was forgone in favour of simply being looked at, and he was as interested in the aesthetic response to nature as to fine art (Shiner, 2001).

occur on the spiritual plane, its effects would ultimately be felt on a temporal one. This was not all that far removed from the position originally taken by Kant for whom an “aesthetic experience of beauty or the sublime does not teach us a particular ‘moral lesson’ but makes us aware of our freedom as ‘moral agents’ (Kant, cited in Shiner, 2001, p.147).

However for others it was not simply a symbol of morality but a force for moral transformation. As William Gilpin, author of the influential guidebooks on the picturesque stated:

When I sit ravished at an Ontario, or stand astonished before the [Raphael] cartoons, or enjoy myself in these happy Walks, I can feel my mind expanded ... and my Heart better disposed...a Taste for these exalted Pleasures contributes towards making me a **better man** (Andrews 1989, p.53, emphasis added).

He was by no means alone in this regard and part of the grounds on which John Stuart Mill (2001 [1863]) had reached his conclusions about the distinction between higher and lower pleasures was that the former contributed towards the capacity for an individual to develop, grow and ultimately contribute more effectively to society. An argument that, as shall be discussed in the final section of this chapter, was central to the manner in which the Arts bound its own discourses to those of the state. For it was variously argued by those who first employed these discourses that certain groups of people such as women, ‘negroes’, the labouring classes etc. were unable to enjoy the higher pleasures, while others could only do so through a process of civilising education (Shiner, 2001). As John Ruskin said, “nor can any noble thing be wealth except to a noble person” (1871, pp.10–11). This is indicative of the extent to which the power of discourse produces not only objects and practices but also subjects (Foucault, 1980b). As such, simultaneous to the conception of a unique artistic experience was the conception of the individual who was not having them for some reason, and whose life was all the worse for it – a discursive identity that would be developed over time into that of the cultural non-participant. As will now be

discussed, it was the existence of this subject identity that would be fundamental in the Arts becoming an institution through which the state sought to manage and regulate the choices of the individual and the manner in which they were understood.

4.3 The Arts as an institution of the state

It is the argument of this thesis that the non-participant is a contemporary label for a subject identity that was established as part of the discursive constitution of the Arts, and as such is fundamental to the discursive logics of this institution and must therefore be maintained. The existence of the non-participant subject assumes that is possible for someone to be failing or unable to have aesthetic experiences. In so doing it gives discursive coherence to the idea that to be able to have such an experience requires one to undertake a particular type of practice, rather than it being an innate aspect of humanity. But this does not explain why there is a constructed problem of cultural non-participation. If the discursive logic of the Arts requires the existence of the non-participant subject then their non-participation would not be seen as a problem from a position within this system of knowledge alone. However the Arts is not the only institution writing the identity of the non-participant, for by the end of the nineteenth century the Arts was to become an institution of the state and the non-participant would act as the primary boundary object (Star and Griesemer, 1989) around which their different discourses could coalesce and in so doing legitimate the presence of the state in the private lives of its citizens. The next section of the chapter discusses the discursive legitimization work that has been conducted in order to maintain the taken for granted status of this relationship.

4.3.1 The Arts and the state

It would be more than a century after the institution of the Arts was established that a formal relationship with the state would be developed. Until late in the nineteenth century, the dominant feeling remained that “as long as the market was seen to be meeting the needs of the public [then here was no real need for the state] to become involved with an activity that was perceived to depend upon individual taste and fashion” (Gray, 2000, p.38). The type of activities most

commonly associated with the Arts were not deemed by those in government to be important in and of themselves (Bennett 1995). Yet over time, and through the lobbying of influential figures, there was a significant ideological shift that situated the private lives of the populace within the purview of the state more so than had ever been the case previously¹¹⁵ (Toleda Silva, 2015). While the initial involvements were small, by the end of the Second World War the British Government would shift from a strategy of casual patronage to direct intervention, when it did “more to commit itself to supporting the arts than it had in the previous century and a half” (Minihan, 1977, p.215), a shift that resulted in what Minihan has described as the nationalisation of culture.

However as Gray (2000, p.38) notes, in a laissez-faire free market economy, when the state does intervene in society it must be seen to be for a purpose and that purpose must either be the protection of the populace or the improvement of their lives to some degree. These purposes legitimate the transference of a portion of an individual’s personal wealth to the state, but in order to do so, the resultant policy interventions, the agents they support, and the outcomes they deliver must also be seen to be legitimate themselves. As such, justification for public subsidy had to be integrated into the institutional discourses of the Arts and as such, adhering to a strict division between the aesthetic and the corporeal was problematic to sustain if the Arts was to be granted public support on the basis of providing a unique and societally useful transformative experience.

And so the introduction of state funding for the Arts necessitated an adaptation of the Arts’ institutional discourses. For as soon as anything becomes a tool of the state it is inevitably instrumentalised and requires that it is understood as something other than what it is (McGuigan, 2004). As Interviewee 21 said, it’s *“because we get public money we are asked to do that [tackle non-participation],*

¹¹⁵ It was the establishment in 1946 of the Arts Council of Great Britain that was the most explicit recognition that the Arts had a legitimate claim on the public purse and that the state had a legitimate interest in the leisure time of its citizens.

if we didn't get public money we wouldn't have to do that, but that would be a whole different planet, wouldn't it?" Belfiore and Bennett have made just this point when they argued that without government funding, debates and arguments such as those that are being considered in this study "would most likely have become a recondite affair, conducted – if at all – by *cognoscenti* far away from the noisy area of public policy" (2010, p.10).

During the financial crisis of 2007 and the austerity policies that followed it, the legitimacy of state subsidies for the Arts was often in question. The rhetoric about public sector accountability meant that all those receiving public money were required to show that they were providing a service that was used by the public, could not be delivered by the market, and were doing so in a manner that offered a measurable return to society. It was an expectation about which the majority of interviewees appeared very aware:

*...there is **an accountability for public investment** which needs to be measured in some way.* (Interviewee 5)

*I guess it is like, if it is **public money**, then you want to know that you are serving the public well and you are **serving the public's interests** and where the public's interests lie.* (Interviewee 26)

*...because we operate in a system where there is public funding of a lot of culture, they believe there needs to be some ... means on **monitoring and assessing that funding**, and that's why they've got the measure in there. In other words it's coming from the wrong end, potentially.* (Interviewee 19)

*I think you have to **account for the money you spend from taxpayers** – so some of the criticism around Forest Pitch was around the cost of the event and how many people saw it relevant to that cost.* (Interviewee 25)

In a 2014 speech, Harriet Harman the then UK Shadow Secretary of State for Culture, stated that "[t]here is a democratic imperative for the arts to show why the hard-pressed taxpayer – struggling with the cost of living crisis – should

fund the arts” (2014). Her ministerial counterpart, Maria Miller, seemed equally in need of persuasion. However, in Scotland, Fiona Hyslop claimed that “the case [for state subsidy] has been made” (2013). Yet to suggest that the case for any public expenditure is not constantly being made, challenged and remade is disingenuous, and the legitimacy of state expenditure on the Arts is one that is arguably challenged more often than most. For the crisis of legitimacy did not start with the financial crisis. Both Holden (2006) and Bennett (1995) had written about it before this event even occurred. In fact questions of legitimacy have existed ever since the financial relationship between the Arts and the state was established, and “[f]rom the start, the question of state subsidies to the arts has been enmeshed in the fierce controversy over public education, and in the pursuit of such elusive concepts as taste, refinement, civilization and morality” (Minihan, 1977, p. 31. See also: Gray 2000; Sinclair 1995). However from the perspective of this study, such controversies are instead understood as examples of the truth games that are played and in particular the way in which such games allow for the gradual adaptation of existing discourses so as to maintain the legitimacy of the institutions that rely on them and the societal inequality they obscure.

4.3.2 Discursive legitimization

As Kangas and Vestheim highlight, “the ‘naturalness’ of institutions gives them strength, makes them seem reasonable and puts them beyond discussion” (2010, p.270). However this natural or legitimate status depends on institutional agents maintaining the discourses upon which both they and the institution rely for meaning, status and power. They manage this through the on-going production of symbolic communication that leaves traces (Taylor and Van Every, 1993). These traces act as a signal to others that the actions of the institution are legitimate and which through their pervasiveness, act as a barrier to the unmanaged entry into the field of new discourses that present alternative realities or legitimate alternate institutions.

However, as McGuigan notes: “no discourse is ever closed off entirely from other discourses or without internally disruptive elements” and thus the discourses of any institution “do not exist in splendid isolation from the leading discourses of the day [...] they are porous and there is interaction between them” (2004, p.35). Different discourses “are intimately tangled with each other and together form the giant milling mass of overall societal discourse” (Jager and Maier, 2009, p.235). This means that structural and cultural changes in society can pose a threat to institutions as they can cause shifting relationships between discourses that may threaten their taken for granted status. In particular, institutions face difficulties where there is a need to secure transference of existing constructions of reality to new communities or generations that have their own system of meanings upon which they could establish new, and ultimately competing, institutions (Berger & Luckmann, 1966 cited in Phillips *et al.*, 2004).

Faced with such threats, institutional agents can choose to adapt the behaviour of the institution to this societal pressure for change, and/or execute strategies that defend the established beliefs and patterns of behaviour on which they depend for their existence (Kangas and Vestheim, 2010). With regards to the second option, this primarily results in what is understood as discursive legitimation work where the institutional agents adapt existing discourses or co-opt new ones in order to manage the meaning associated with their actions and ultimately construct refreshed “explanations and justifications for the fundamental elements of their collective, institutionalised existence” (Boyce, 1996, p.5).

Phillips *et.al.* (2004) offer a set of conditions under which discursive legitimation work is most likely to strengthen and protect the coherence and status of an institution¹¹⁶. Firstly they suggest that agents who are understood

¹¹⁶ While Phillips *et. al* are explicitly concerned with the emergence of new institutions, they acknowledge that institutionalisation is the process by which institutions are not only created

as having the right to speak within the field(s) in which the institution seeks legitimacy and influence should undertake it. Likewise, should any texts be produced or practice undertaken they should be of a recognisable and interpretable genre appropriate to the field(s). Finally, where new and adapted discourses build upon existing discourses both within the institution, the field(s), and even elsewhere in society, their adoption and success is also more likely. This final point is important as it can result in the core discursive architecture of the institution being bound to those established or emerging discourses that are most prominent in society at the time and in so doing add to the normativity of the institution's existence.

However throughout this process there are also three important conditions that any discursive legitimisation work must fulfil (Phillips *et al.*, 2004). Firstly, that the discourses remain coherent and structured so as to present a unified view of some aspect of social reality. Secondly, that the discourses are supported and consistent with other, broader discourses, as their self-regulating mechanisms will reinforce each other¹¹⁷. Finally that competing discourses offering an alternative construction of the same aspect of social reality must be neutralised so as to ensure that agents are not presented with alternative institutions of ostensibly equal value and therefore lower costs associated with non-adoption of the practices of the dominant institution. And so in seeking to maintain the legitimacy of the relationship between the Arts and the state, the discourses of the Arts have had to be continually aligned with the dominant discourses of the state¹¹⁸. Yet this has had to be achieved without risking the coherence of its own system of discursive logic.

but also produced and reproduced. As such, it can be assumed that their model is also applicable to a consideration of institutions' maintenance and resistance to change.

¹¹⁷ This is similar to the argument made by Michel Pecheux (1981) who has noted that the strength of prevailing discourses (and thus also institutions) are secured *interdiscursively* and when most effectively done makes it difficult to notice how institutions and the discourses that sustain them "make it virtually impossible to think outside of them" (McGuigan, 2004, p.35).

¹¹⁸ While there is not the space to discuss it here, accounts of how Keynes advocated for the establishment of the Arts Council suggest that he was adept at such discursive legitimisation and the deployment of different discourses for different audiences (for a discussion of Keynes' approach to charing the Arts Council see Pick, 1991; Sinclair, 1995; Pinnock, 2006).

The on-going process of discursive legitimation is one that Larsen (2014) argues remains valid and necessary work for all those working in, and advocating for, the Arts today. For while the subject of the non-participant provided the ideal boundary object around which a legitimising system of logic could be established, as other societal discourses shifted, further discursive legitimation work was required in order to offer alternative discourses about the relationship between the Arts and the state. However, as shall be outlined below, all of these discourses were reliant upon the existence of the non-participant subject as an object upon which the Arts and its unique experience could act, for as Bjornsen (2012) has noted¹¹⁹, the legitimacy of cultural policy actions relies to a great extent on an abstract faith in art and its transformative powers on certain individuals.

4.3.3 The discursive strand of redistribution and democratising culture

From the outset, in order to be seen as a legitimate site for state intervention, the Arts had to be recognised for “their contribution to national prestige, and their role in civilising the population” (Gray, 2000, p.37). As such, and up until the nineteen seventies, state subsidy for the Arts was discursively justified in two primary ways. One strand focused on representing access to the Arts and the unique experience that this afforded as an inalienable right and one that had been denied to the majority by the ruling bourgeoisie and the aristocracy that had preceded them. State subsidies for the Arts were represented as part of an egalitarian process of democratizing culture (Mulcahy, 2006; Landry and Matarasso, 1999; Evrard, 1997). This was a discourse that itself gained legitimacy from the wider post-war European discourses of the redistributive welfare state (Stevenson *et. al.* 2015; McGuigan, 2004; Duelund, 2003), the core assumption of which is that the wealth (both tangible and intangible) of a society should be evenly distributed amongst its population. Those activities, objects and organisations that had already been discursively written upon by the Arts as being of unique aesthetic value were now represented as being part

¹¹⁹ While Bjornsen’s study is based in Norway, he argues that such a belief exists across Europe.

of the intangible wealth of the nation and should not therefore be the preserve of any one group. State intervention could therefore be justified in order to facilitate its equal dispersal. As McGuigan has noted, in his 1929 lectures on *Equality*, “R.H. Tawney (1931) set the social democratic agenda for appropriating ‘culture’ from the sole possession of a privileged elite and extending it to the masses” (2004, p.39). The non-participant is thus vital in this discourse as the subject to which such redistribution can occur.

4.3.4 The discursive strand of transformation

However the egalitarian sentiment of this discourse was also bound to a more pragmatic one that sought to make clear how the provision of the unique aesthetic experience that the Arts claimed to be able to provide would have a useful impact on society. Its conception can also be traced to the nineteenth century and is indicative of the discursive shift to governance that Foucault has associated with the modern episteme (1977). For while Utilitarians such as Francis Hutcheson and Jeremy Bentham had argued the role of the state was to seek the greatest happiness for the greatest number, the difficulties with this position become apparent quite quickly. What if the activities that make one person happy cause pain to someone else? And so in partial response to this difficulty, Bentham’s anointed prodigy, John Stuart Mill, rejected a purely quantitative understanding of pleasure. He believed that society would not prosper if it solely sought to allow individuals to pursue pleasure indiscriminately and only for their own benefit. With distinct echoes of Kant, he proposed that there existed two tiers of pleasure. Within this binary, the pleasure of intellectual and moral actions was of greater value than the supposedly simple pleasures gained through acts that required less cognitive engagement – push pin was most certainly not equal to poetry¹²⁰ as Bentham had argued. Rather than happiness, the result of simple pleasure was said to be better understood as contentment and thus ultimately of lesser value:

¹²⁰ A reference to Bentham’s oft quoted claim that assuming the quantity of pleasure was equal “[p]rejudice apart the game of push pin is of equal value with the arts and sciences of music and poetry” (Bentham cited in Bronfenbrenner, 1977).

It is quite compatible with the principle of utility to recognise that some kinds of pleasure are more desirable and more valuable than others. It would be absurd that, while in estimating all other things quality is considered as well as quantity, but that the estimation of pleasure should be supposed to depend on quantity alone” (Mill, 2001 [1863], n.p.)

Mill believed the pursuit of the higher pleasures was not only of greater intrinsic value to the individual, but more importantly for the current discussion, that those who pursued such pleasure would be of greater value to society and thus ultimately capable of bringing a greater happiness to everyone overall than would have been achieved had they forever been tempted to forgo such pleasures in favour of more base satisfaction and personal contentment. The converse of this logic is that those who do not pursue these higher pleasures are likely to be of less value to society and thus most likely to be deprived.

These ideas were complimented by a new understanding of mankind that had been engendered during the Enlightenment. Men and women were no longer accepted as immutable facts whose essential nature would remain unchanged from the cradle to the grave. Instead they came to be seen as being “both pliable and in dire need of repair and/or improvement” (Bauman, 2004, p.63). As such, culture became shorthand for the management of human thought and behavior (Bauman, 2004), akin to the notions of cultivation and breeding in which the primary concern was to arrest deterioration and to encourage improvement and refinement. The state was now understood to have a responsibility to ensure that effective and productive citizens were grown from the raw material that was born. This was to be achieved through targeted interventions in their education and social activities, what Bennett has described as the civilizing mission of European cultural policy (1995). The assumption was that left to their own devices individual humans would not manage this trajectory themselves, “they had to be guided by other humans, educated and trained in the art of educating and training humans” (Bauman, 2004, p.63).

The belief that state intervention in the leisure time activities of citizens “might function to re-engineer the[ir] soul become a commonplace assumption of both totalitarian and, also, albeit to a much lesser extent, liberal and social-democratic thought and practice” (McGuigan, 2004, p.36). Both systems are the product of the modern episteme and both adhere to its belief in the logic of the inevitable progression of civilization (Danaher *et al.*, 2000). It is an argument that persists today, for as Interviewee 19 stated when asked why the government should be interested in cultural participation they responded that it was because people believed it was a “*fundamental part of a civilised society*”. The alliance between the Arts and the state remains possible because “[t]hey are both after the same goal”: to make the world different from what it is at the moment and/or from what it is likely to turn into if left alone” (Bauman, 2004, p.65). While they might be seen to quarrel, “it is not about whether the world should be an object of constant intervention or rather left to its own inner tendencies - but about the direction which the intervention should take” (Bauman, 2004, p.65).

Given the unique, transformative experience to which the Arts laid claim, minimal discursive adaptations were required in order for state subsidies to the Arts to be represented as part of the solution to the increasing numbers of urban poor brought to the cities by industrialisation and who were seen to be in need of just such cultivation and improvement. It simply required a reframing of the relationship with those who had previously been dismissed as unable to have aesthetic experiences (Shiner, 2001) whereby they were now understood as no longer unable but instead having merely lacked the opportunity to gain the knowledge and understanding necessary to appreciate them. This adapted discourse became central to how the relationship between the Arts, the non-participant and the state would be represented, as evidence by the statement of the first Minister for the Arts, Jennie Lee, when launching the government’s White Paper:

...before we arrogantly say that any group of our citizens are not capable of appreciating the best in the arts, let us make absolutely certain that we have put the best within their reach. (Lee, cited in Black, 2006, p.128)

These claims had discursive strength because of the extent to which they made explicit use of the existing dividing practices (Danaher *et al.*, 2000) that were used to delineate society. The two identities became mutually self-affirming because those most deprived socially were identified as not having been exposed to the Arts, their lack of exposure to the Arts in turn seen as a contributing factor to their social deprivation. By association, the supposed cultural non-participation of these individuals becomes part of the wider problematisation of their societal disengagement and in so doing gains legitimacy as a site for state intervention. Subsidising the Arts can therefore be justified on the basis of providing access to opportunities for these necessary interactions to occur, both in order to help more people transform into effective and productive citizens and to maintain the contributions of those, who by virtue of their existing participation, have already been transformed. The government is thus represented as facilitating access to a unique and essential experience through the removal of barriers that had previously limited the ability of the majority to have them. The measure of success would therefore be the socio-economic and demographic representativeness of those interacting with that which the government subsidised (EDUCULT, 2015) as it would be evidence that no one was failing to be improved by these interventions.

4.3.5 Contemporary discursive adaptations: enrichment

Discursive legitimisation work such as the type outlined in the first part of this chapter produces new discourses and adds further discursive strands to those that already existed. However these should not be understood in a historical sense where the creation and adoption of one results in the abandonment of another. As Talja (1999) notes, there are always several more-or-less conflicting discourses existing in a particular field of knowledge or institution because new discourses are constructed as corrections or adaptations to prior discourses.

However established discourses do not vanish, they exist side by side with new ones, “that is why discourses are internally relatively coherent, but mutually contradictory and alternative” (Talja, 1999, p.468). Indeed, as stated previously, an institution is strengthened by the presence of multiple discourses upon which its agents can draw, in particular if these discourses share commonalities to which each can refer. As such, the discursive strand of a unique transformative experience and the association of the non-participant with those identities that the state represents as problematic are both still part of the discursive legitimization work being done by the Arts today. The adaptability of these discourses has allowed the Arts to intertwine its own logics with the discourse of government very effectively ever since. The mutually affirming discursive coherence could be readily refreshed through simply altering the nature of the transformation on offer so as to best relate to the priorities of the current government – a discursive perspective on a process that Gray has described as policy attachment (2004) and Belfiore as defensive instrumentalism (2012)¹²¹.

This process of adaptation means that, although nowhere in the data was there any reference to an aesthetic experience, it was still clearly understood that the experience of participating with the Arts was one of distinct and unique value as evidenced through the regularity with which it was described as “*enriching*”:

*...irrespective of any instrumental uses, instrumental benefits that come out of cultural engagement, it is just that intrinsic value of, of... of having your lives **enriched** by cultural activity* (Interviewee 4)

*...they may not have realised that the museum could ... **enrich**... their lives* (Interviewee 1)

¹²¹ While there is not the space or need to explore at this point all of the transformative claims that have been made about participation with the Arts (these have been well rehearsed both in Chapter 2 of this study and elsewhere) it is worth acknowledging that various examples of these claims were evident in the data generated.

*...it is about giving people a new experience and if they take to that experience and find it **enriching**, how do you enable that to continue* (Interviewee 23)

*...there is obviously a big economic thing as part of it, but I would also hope, you know, that other side, that it is about **enriching** lives as part of it as well* (Interviewee 12)

*...so yeah it is about.... yeah **enrichment**, expanding horizons...* (Interviewee 36)

*...what about their **enrichment**, what keeps them pushing themselves forward as individuals?* (Interviewee 21)

*...government really has those targets because they too believe that access and engagement in cultural activity **enriches people's lives** [... ...] it is our job to put on the best work that we possibly can and, you know, and to give an **enriching quality experience*** (Interviewee 19)

Given that enriching means to add value, the somewhat tautological assertion being made appears to be that participation with the Arts is valuable because it adds value to one's life. Implicit in statements such as these is that the life of a non-participant is less rich than the life of someone who participates with the Arts, presumably because they lack the enriching higher pleasures that participation with the Arts can afford in the shape of the unique aesthetic experience. As Interviewee 38 stated: *"I mean you don't want to be too evangelical about these things, but I really do believe that **people can get more out of their lives** if they engage with the arts"*¹²². Certain people are represented as being unable to lead fully enriched lives (whatever that may be) by solely doing the myriad of other activities that the interviewees previously acknowledged those who are labelled as cultural non-participants are likely to be doing instead of participating with the Arts. It must be assumed that these activities are of lesser value, for it is them that the non-participant would be required to stop doing in order to participate with the Arts, no matter how much they may enjoy them and believe that they add value to their lives.

¹²² See Appendix 1.09 for further relevant examples from the data.

Indeed it was clear that no Interviewee had considered what type of activities the supposed non-participant might have to forego in order to participate with the Arts. As was discussed in Chapter 2, while the notion of opportunity cost has been present in the cultural economics literature (Felton, 1992), discussions around the social impact of the arts (Landry *et al.*, 1993) and with regards to arts marketing, it is not something that is considered as part of the problem construction of cultural non-participation. No interviewee appeared to have reflected upon the fact that asking someone to participate in one thing may mean them having to give up participating in something else, thus bringing into question the relative balance of costs between these two (or more) options.

Leaving to one side for a moment the question of whether any experience is inherently more enriching than any other, one must wonder why anyone would want to go to somewhere or spend time with someone that judges their life to be lacking richness and in doing so “insistently confirms their low status and reinforces a sense of inferiority” (Holden, 2010, p.37). The interviewees appeared aware of this implied value judgment and it was clearly a cause of unease for some given that they appeared keen to recognise the value of other activities - *I'm not saying you shouldn't like that stuff, I'm not saying you are having a lesser experience* (Interviewee 41). And so while it might be assumed that certain activities are understood as an impoverishing experience that diminish the value of one's life to some degree, it was not evident that interviewees were suggesting that the preference of non-participants were impoverishing *per se*. However the argument that participation with the Arts offers a uniquely enriching experience does inevitably require that alternative experiences are presumed to exist that at a minimum, offer less enrichment than participation with the Arts does and are therefore less valuable for someone to have. As Connor (1992) notes, in order to affirm the dominance of a particular set of values it is not necessary to explicitly challenge the values of others, but it is vital to subtly undermine them through the repetition of implicitly unfavourable comparisons and unacknowledged hierarchies.

Furthermore, and as Danto has pointed out, “it is precisely because the advocates of the arts aim at enriching the lives of ordinary people that it will not greatly help them to say that their lives are already enriched through doing something other than the arts elsewhere” (1997 cited in Jensen 2002, p.150).

4.3.6 Contemporary discursive adaptations: growth, expansion and cultural health

As was the case when the state first started to subsidise the Arts, this unique enriching experience continues to be represented as resulting in a positive change or transformation for those that have it. For example, Creative Scotland talks of the extent to which “*Artists, creative people and organisations **change lives and unlock new futures***” (Creative Scotland, 2014c, p.48) while in the policy document *Culture Delivers* (Scottish Government, 2008), it is stressed that “[t]here is clear quantitative and qualitative evidence of the positive **transformational impact** of cultural and creative activity on individuals”. It was also a narrative that some of the interviewees used in reference to their own cultural participation. For example Interviewee 12 spoke of the fact that their preferences for cultural participation were shaped by those activities with which they had previously found “*meaningful **transformational engagement***” while Interviewee 38 stated that: “*I was lucky enough to get involved with the Arts when I was very young and **that was a life changing experience** for me and it has stayed with me [...] that’s my motivation, I would just like more people to be able to experience it*”.

While the state may no longer be faced with the uneducated masses of the industrial revolution, in a neo-liberal meritocracy the type of transformation presented as necessary is that which supports personal growth and self-improvement. This valorisation of self-development is part of the discourses of social mobility, meritocracy and individual aspiration that are often associated with the Thatcher governments and perceived as having been continued by New Labour for whom “[a]ccording to [their] lexicon, only self-enrichment counts as aspiration” (Jones, 2012, p.90). These in turn gain their legitimacy through their

adherence to what Foucault (2002b [1966]) has argued are part of the fundamental orders of discourse of the modern episteme that assumes the necessity and potential of an “inevitable progression of civilisation [in which] there is an ideal, ultimate and complete form of civilisation, and that humanity is developing steadily and inevitably towards that point” (Danaher *et al.*, 2000, p.21). These ideas of growth and personal improvement were regularly evoked in the responses of the interviewees through the imagery of expansion, stretching, and freedom from the limits of a restricted perspective:

*To **expand their mind and to expand their understanding of culture**, because people might have had access to arts at school, but **they might have just drawn some still lifes or made a clay pot**, they wouldn't understand that art could be video instillation, or it could be a folder full of rubbish that somebody has collected, you know, we have got expertise in contemporary art and providing a kind of expanded understanding of it [... ..] it is about **expanding their horizons** and sometimes **freeing them up**... (Interviewee 12)*

*...there is a role for introducing people to kind of a... introducing people to the idea of **expanding their cultural horizons**... (Interviewee 11)*

*It gives them an opportunity to experience something different, something that they have not experienced before, and about which they can have an opinion, it just maybe **opens up their world** a little bit (Interviewee 38)*

*And I believe, actually, drawing on some of the work done in cognitive psychology or whatever, **that people's ambitions, views of the world and whatever, open up** (Interviewee 25)*

While such claims can be recognised as contemporary adaptations of those upon which the relationship between the Arts and state was first based, a new addition to such assertions is the connection that is made between cultural participation and someone who was healthy, implicitly suggesting that those labelled as non-participants are culturally unhealthy in some regard and therefore in need of the cultural equivalent of the NHS to make them better:

*It is **much healthier**, it is **absolutely healthy** when you talk about a particular range, or a particular art form and you say, I like this, but I don't like that (Interviewee 17)*

*...to get people to have a very interesting, **healthy creative life** you have to sweat a bit, it is about challenging what you know, and trying new experiences and I think that is what our, that sort of engaging with the public is about (Interviewee 22)*

The healthy expansion and personal growth engendered by cultural participation is then presented as contributing to a process that allows those currently identified by the state as problematic to transform themselves into someone who can integrate and contribute to society in the manner that is desired:

*I guess that's what I've always thought that, that if more people are engaged with, with the culture in which they live, the less likely they are to ... to behave in a way **that didn't fit ... within that society** (Interviewee 3)*

*Sometimes people end up engaging in the arts because of who they are, where they are, because the collection of people within which they function [...] different hierarchies [social work, health visitors etc.] where people are encouraging them **to have that involvement with society** (Interviewee 41)*

*That's what we do, it's for arts organisation to be aware of who those key people are in those communities to try and reach out to **those people that are just entirely disengaged with society** (Interviewee 38)*

As the final quote makes clear, the subject of the non-participant remains closely aligned with a certain type of person, just as it was at the turn of the century, and this association will be discussed in more detail in Chapter 5.

4.4 A discursive knot

The milling mass of societal discourse “is growing constantly and exuberantly” (Jager and Maier, 2009, p.235) and as such, it is not unusual for an ever-greater number of discursive strands to coexist in productive tension. These strands are

all variously employed by the agents of an institution in order to best convince the indifferent, the unconvinced and the hostile, of the naturalness of their continuing position of privilege. As has been outlined above, such discursive legitimation is a strategy that has been effectively employed by the agents of the Arts from the outset of its relationship with the state. This has led to the multiple discourses of cultural participation that present competing and contradictory notions of what it means to participate in culture, and the unique value of doing so. As Jensen notes, in doing so the Arts has been defined:

... in ways that explicitly or implicitly respond to various hostilities (the arts aren't elitist, and need not be controversial), to skepticism (the arts are an investment, they make money, they stabilize communities), and to indifference (the arts aren't frills or for someone else, they are vital ways to make life better for each and every one of us). The arts become vaguely defined as a *mélange* of cultural forms [...] while still being touted as powerful medicine for whatever ails society (2002, p.148)

Both Jensen (2002) and Shiner (2001) see such discursive work as a highly successful act of self-preservation by those who can exert the most power in the field. Whereby these individuals strategically incorporate the ideas, activities and arguments of those who resist the discourses upon which their status is based. However over time this adoption and interweaving of discourses can result in a discursive knot (Wodak, 2007) that becomes increasingly complex and ostensibly contradictory. A complexity that itself starts to risk the discursive coherence of the institution they were employed to defend. Binding the eighteenth century discourses of the Arts to modern discourses of social democratic redistribution, neo-liberal service provision, and the free market of the creative industries has left the Arts somewhat Janus faced. The Arts must be seen as unique but ubiquitous, exclusive but inclusive, not for everyone but for anyone, in need of state aid but a driver of the economy. It must be seen to respect diverse cultural values while simultaneously finding something wrong with the cultural values of certain problematic individuals that needs rectified

and which only the Arts can do. The final section of this chapter will reflect on one aspect of this discursive knot and consider how its threat to the discursive coherence of the institution has been managed.

4.4.1 Risking the discursive integrity of the Arts

Shiner argues that a point has been reached in which one is now able to “call virtually anything art and get away with it” (2001, p.3). This thesis would argue that this is because the ongoing process of discursive legitimation has resulted in the Arts repeatedly jettisoning its own criteria about what objects and activities count as being part of the Arts. As such, one can find themselves in the position of celebrating as a great example of the Arts, capable of delivering observable social impacts, that which in a previous era had been decried as the immoral entertainment of the masses (Belfiore and Bennett, 2010). This is important because while the discourse of democratising culture had been based on the logics of a knowing elite bringing the best to the most, diffusing the understanding of what the best is in order to say that the most are being reached means that ironically the “cultural democracy movement led unwittingly to the erosion of the social-democratic project from the inside” (McGuigan, 2004, p.41). As Mirza (2012) has noted, opening up the definition of the Arts in policy, practice and criticism was a threat to its own existence, for what is disseminated more widely is bound to change in the dissemination. Likewise, given the extent to which the Arts has been complicit in employing arguments about the beneficence of the market, there is now a genuine problem in justifying the way in which public cultural policy works and in particular the subsidies that are distributed (Bennett, 1995).

As Jensen has highlighted, “repositioning the arts as vernacular culture, a tactic used in contemporary arts funding, makes the heroic opposition [to popular culture] more difficult to sustain” (2002, p.196), for as the definition grows ever broader, “the more fragile, incoherent and tension-ridden these policies have become” (Craik, 2007, p.26). In particular because for the majority of the population their “cultural needs and aspirations are being met, for better or

worse, [...] by the market as goods and services” (Garnham, cited in McGuigan, 2004, p.42). For if it is the case that the activities that are legitimate within the discourses of the creative industries and abundant participation are adopted as legitimate modes of cultural participation offering the same unique type of experience as the Arts, then it does not matter that the majority of the public have little interest in what is subsidised. In turn, the discourse of inadequate participation, the subject identity of a non-participant and the need for state sponsored cultural intermediaries to guide them would be increasingly difficult to sustain. Pushing the boundaries of what counts as offering an aesthetic experience has put the whole concept of the Arts and its relationship with the state at risk.

4.4.2 The persistence of the Arts as a unique field of human practice

Yet despite being discursively associated with culture, the creative industries, and any and all forms of creativity, the idea of the Arts as a separate field of human activity continues to persist in cultural policy. It has not been assimilated into an anthropological discourse as just another form of social activity and thus simply one manifestation of the multiplicity of cultures that exist within society. Discursively, the Arts remains apart, distinct and individual¹²³. Looking at the Scottish Government’s website, it is littered with references to the Arts **and**, indeed across the majority of the documents analysed are phrases that affirm this separation¹²⁴:

*The fun, fulfilment and creative stimulation of taking part in culture, the **arts and** heritage activity* (Scottish Government, 2008)

¹²³The researcher does not suggest that the Arts is alone in this regard, other entities are also sometimes separated out such as heritage, screen or the creative industries (for example, Creative Scotland, 2014c references all of these) but the Arts arguably enjoys far greater recognition and application across all areas of society and multiple discursive planes. The researcher also accept that some of these might be dismissed as the stylistic decisions of a writer seeking to avoid repetition - indeed this has been a difficulty faced by the current author - however in order to be able to make that decision the alternatives they employ must continue to make sense.

¹²⁴ Even within the UN declaration of Human rights, it is felt necessary to distinguish the Arts from the cultural life of the community, as Article 27 states: “Everyone has the right freely to participate in the cultural life of the community, **to enjoy the arts** and to share in scientific advancement and its benefits”.

***Arts and** culture can bring real benefits for communities and individuals*
(Scottish Government, 2015c)

*We enable people and organisations to work in and experience the **arts and** creative sectors in Scotland* (Creative Scotland, 2014c, p.1)

*..if we are to make the most of the richness and diversity of **arts and** culture in Scotland* (Creative Scotland, 2014c, p.9)¹²⁵

Discursive boundaries may change but that does not mean that boundaries no longer exist. For while it may be true that the range of objects and activities that can be understood as the Arts has significantly expanded, it remains the case that it is possible for something to be understood as the Arts, to be judged according to the rules and logics of something called the Arts, and that upon being accepted as a manifestation of the Arts it is granted the potential to offer a unique experience for those that participate with it¹²⁶. When a new activity, object or organisation is associated with the Arts this is simply an alteration of its place within the dispositive, from one in which it was considered as an example of what the Arts is not, to one in which it is representative of just how diverse, and thus inclusive, the Arts can be.

This can be illustrated by returning to the examples given by interviewees of participation projects involving tattoos, parkour and DJ's. For if excellence and expertise matter in relation to the quality of the experience, then a publicly funded gallery is surely not the obvious site at which these will be found with regards to tattooing. One can legitimately ask the question of why, if it is tattoo design that someone is most interested in, should they not be supported to interact with tattoo designers in a tattoo studio rather than the outreach officers of a contemporary art gallery? Why could one interviewee not get state support for a club night, when the same DJ's were subsidised to play the same music at a

¹²⁵ See Appendix 1.10 for further relevant examples from the data.

¹²⁶ Artists such as Duchamp, Yves Klein, John Cage, Bill Woodrow, Carl Andre, Jean Arp, Tristan Zara, and Orlan are all good examples of those whose work has problematised the concept of art to the point that the physical attributes of the object were meaningless in attempting to define what art is, however all of which continue to be celebrated and recognised as art.

museum Lates event? The logic behind these distinctions is evident in the response of Interviewee 41 who regularly stated that there would be added value in activities that a non-participant might be doing elsewhere being done at the Interviewee's place of work, because it would help to improve the "*quality of the experience*". By being taken into and written upon by the discourses of the Arts the existing social practice of those labelled as non-participants gains the status of a unique, enriching experience of greater value to society than that which they were doing otherwise. But in order for this to occur, it must involve some degree of interaction with state sponsored cultural intermediaries, for only they have the right to write the discourses of the Arts upon that which otherwise would not be seen as a legitimate manifestation of its practices.

Cultural participation has become increasingly less about the specifics of what one does and more about where the activity is discursively located by those that are legitimated to speak within the field of cultural policy. Just as Danto (1964) reached the conclusion that while anything could be art, not everything was, so too do the dominant discourses of cultural policy imply that while anything can be cultural participation, not everything is. To understand Danto's argument requires a reorientation of the focus away from the object itself and towards the individuals who were making the judgments. For Danto, their opinion only mattered if they were part of the art world. Only they were able to judge something to be art as only they had the required knowledge and experience to do so. In short, those who claim to know in advance what a manifestation of the Arts is are those who can then speak in the name of the Arts whether as doctrine or ethos. Art was art because those that understood what was legitimate to be part of the Arts identified it as such, and it is the same rationale that is now employed with regards to cultural participation¹²⁷.

4.4.3 The importance of managing identities

And so for all that there may have been an expansion of the type of activities that are accepted as legitimate sites of cultural participation, it remains the case

¹²⁷ This is also the same argument that Osborne (2003) has made about creativity.

that in doing so these activities are adopted into an existing system of meaning and values in which managing the identities of the subject becomes increasingly important. For there will never be a definitive list of the objects with which cultural participation can occur. In fact the opposite is true, for debate and discussion about what would count has become an increasingly important part of the discursive practice of the institution, so long as any debate does not question the validity of the institution itself. As Gell has argued, the Arts is:

...really a secular form of religion, not in that everyone embraces it but in so far as it has been sacralized beyond contestation; we can argue with each other within the aesthetic sphere but the aesthetic sphere itself is a sacred place (1992, p.42)

Instead what is important is the degree to which the validity of that institution as a “sacred place” now relies more than ever on the assumption that two types of people exist: those that know and those that are unknowing, those whose values are coordinated and those that are not (Gell, 1992). Or to put it in the contemporary language of the problem construction: those that do not participate and those that are allowed to label others with that identity. Maintaining the existence of the non-participant negates the need to ever definitively explain what is and isn’t cultural participation in practice. Instead, discursively affirming the existence of the non-participant in text, speech and practice implicitly defines cultural participation as a distinct social activity that it is possible not to do. And it is this possibility that is arguably vital in protecting the institution of the Arts from the oblivion of meaninglessness that the ongoing discursive legitimation work of its agents has risked invoking.

Summary

This chapter has argued that the discursive possibility of both non-participation and the subject identity of the non-participant were established as part of the discursive constitution of the Arts at the end of the eighteenth century. As such, the subject of the non-participant has always been a necessary part of the institutional discourses of the Arts, discourses that required adaptation when

the Arts sought a formal relationship with the state. At first, the subject of the non-participant provided the ideal boundary object around which the discourses of these two institutions could be woven together. The Arts was already discursively associated with a unique and transformative experience and existing dividing practices meant that there were those in society the state had deemed in need of transformation. The fact that those represented by the state as being in need of transformation were not currently participating with the Arts could in turn be pointed to as evidence that the transformative claims of the Arts were true and thus justification for their continued support. Now, not only was the possibility of non-participation fundamental to the institutional discourses of the Arts, but the subject of the non-participant also provided this institution with an object upon which it could claim to positively act in the interests of society, and thus legitimate its privileged relationship with the state and resultant public subsidy.

However there is a difficulty that the Arts must continually negotiate in order to maintain the legitimacy of these claims. For despite all the activity that has been undertaken under the rationale of increasing participation, it remains the case that the majority of what receives public subsidy attracts the participation and interest of a minority of the population. As has been noted in Chapter 3, one of the largest pieces of cultural subsidy in Scotland goes on Scottish Opera, yet 95% of the public do not attend the opera. While free entry to museums may have encouraged existing audiences to go more often, very few of those not previously going have altered their behaviour (Bailey and Falconer, 1998; Martin, 2002). This causes a paradox for the Arts. While the existence of the non-participant provides part of the *raison-d'être* for its continued subsidy, the persistent non-participation of some individuals can simultaneously undermine the arguments on which this relationship has been built. For as Interviewee 38 succinctly pointed out:

...if you are making the case [for subsidy] based on the benefits of cultural participation then you have to demonstrate that an awful lot of people are participating to be able to justify the money [...] If the arts are not for

everybody then why are we subsidising the arts to the extent that we are not subsidising other things?.

For no matter which claims about the impact of the Arts are made, they almost all rely to a great extent on the active interaction between the Arts and individuals, they all rely on participation. “Art which no-one wants to use is *not* an addition to the nation’s wealth” (Pinnock, 2006, p.175, emphasis in original). This was something that even John Ruskin acknowledged, for despite advocating for the recognition of intrinsic value, he equally acknowledged that any intrinsic value is only transformed into what he described as effectual value through direct interaction between agent and object (Ruskin, 1871).

The individual cannot be enlightened and enriched at a distance. Intangible societal wealth cannot be redistributed to those who are not there to collect it. The excluded cannot be included if they continue to be absent from what is deemed normative. While there are other arguments about the value of public subsidy for the Arts that on face value do not depend on use – legacy and bequest, prestige, option value (Ridge, *et. al.* 2007; Holden 2006; Holden 2004) – in actuality they remain dependent upon a presumption of use by somebody at some point. Something that provides benefits for some rather than all would struggle to legitimately lay claim to public subsidy in a liberal democracy. At a minimum it should be clear that while all might not be making use of it now, they value the option to be able to make use of it later. However as the results of the SHS - like the *Taking Part* survey in England – show, despite almost seventy years of state subsidy, it remains the case that patterns of participation with many of the manifestations of the Arts receiving the most significant levels of subsidy remain largely unchanged. So even if claims about the transformative powers of participation with the Arts are true, the majority of the public that are paying for them are not exposed to them. Thus, as Pinnock succinctly points out, if public subsidy for the Arts faces a crisis of legitimacy it is not because the claims made by the Arts Council and their subsidised organisations “are in any way objectionable” but rather that their “record of delivery simply contradicts them” (Pinnock, 2006, p.176). Explanations are thus required as to why

someone would intentionally opt not to do something that could a.) offer them an experience that they could not find elsewhere and b.) in having that experience contribute towards their own growth as an individual in a manner that would gain them societal status and advantage. Non-participation appears as a highly irrational thing to do and the discursive logics of the problem construction must account for this. The 'ordinary' habits of the 'ordinary' people with which the contemporary system of government is so keen that those receiving public subsidy consult (Clarke, 2013) must be represented in such a manner as to justify the continued existence of state subsidy for the Arts.

Chapter 5 will now argue that to a great extent this is done through the way in which the subject identity of the non-participant has been constructed as an object within the discourse. The chapter will do this through a detailed analysis of how the non-participant is constructed as a less desirable model of agency than that associated with the cultural participant. It will show how the attitudes of non-participants are contrasted with those who are implicitly labelled as cultural participants and how these asserted differences problematises the agency of anyone labelled as a non-participant, representing them as being unable to make choices in their own best interest.

Chapter 5 – Fantasmic logic: Defining desirable models of agency

In Chapter 4 it was argued that the problem of cultural non-participation is more accurately understood as a problem of non-participation with the Arts, a discursive institution established towards the end of the eighteenth century and which now enjoys a privileged relationship with the state. The possibility of non-participation and the subject of the non-participant were both argued to be integral components of the discursive architecture of this institution. Furthermore, the subject of the non-participant proved valuable when that institution developed a formal relationship with the state as it provided a boundary object around which the discourses of the two institutions could be combined, through each affirming the dividing practices of the other. State subsidies for the Arts could be justified as part of providing access to opportunities for those who were socially deprived to develop their sensitivity for the aesthetic and in so doing transform themselves in the type of citizen who could make a more valuable contribution to society. As the data generated for this study shows, it is an argument that remains in use today, albeit adapted to the various discursive strands that have been created and revised as part of the discursive legitimization work undertaken to constantly affirm the legitimacy of the relationship between the Arts and the state.

However it has been consistently apparent that those to whom this transformative experience was supposed to be of most value have continually failed to take up the opportunities that state subsidy was providing. This chapter now turns its attention to the fantasmic¹²⁸ logic (Howarth, 2010) of the problem construction in order to consider how this apparent failure has been explained, and the risk to the institution negated, through managing the subject identity of the non-participant as an object within the discourse. The discussion will show how constructing and managing the identity of the non-participant simultaneously manages how the actions of those not participating with the Arts are understood, thus providing explanations as to why they continue to reject that which will supposedly enrich their lives. In so doing this Chapter is

¹²⁸ While etymologically it would appear to make sense to talk of Phantasmic Logic, in the source text from which this term has been taken it has been spelt in the manner used here.

specifically concerned with research questions 5 - What subjects are constructed within the problem? And 6 - How are these subjects constructed?

5.1 Constructing the non-participant

The first section of this chapter will focus in greater detail on the manner in which the subject of the non-participant is constructed. Chapter 4 has already shown that this subject identity is understood to be in need of transformation, enrichment and is even culturally unhealthy; however the focus of this discussion will be on the identity based explanations – the fantasmic logics – that are offered in the discourse as to why non-participants fail to participate with that which would improve them.

5.1.1 Non-participants are not always statistically non-participants

In practice, cultural non-participants do not appear to be identified by their lack of cultural participation as measured by the SHS. The researcher could find no evidence from the responses of the interviewees that any attempts had been made to identify if those individuals that interviewees had worked with as part of cultural participation projects would be recorded as cultural non-participants in the SHS. Nor did there appear to be significant awareness of what other organisations may be doing to engage with the same group of supposed non-participants - *“You know we are doing this piece of work but I don’t know who else is doing these pieces of work”* (Interviewee 4).

In fact when asked, a number of interviewees explicitly stated that the individuals they worked with did participate in culture elsewhere and did already exhibit preferences for certain types of activities that would be accepted as legitimate sites of cultural participation within the discourse of abundant participation. This was particularly the case amongst those interviewees that were more likely to work directly with the public. They far more readily spoke about project participants as individuals, exhibiting a far greater degree of knowledge about the specifics of their lives. For example, when asked if the groups they were trying to engage with might simply be participating with culture elsewhere, Interviewee 2 appeared entirely certain that they were –

“yeah, yeah absolutely they are”. Likewise, in talking about an outreach project Interviewee 12 stated *“the sixteen to nineteen program that we have got, those young people all have a general interest in the arts to start with”*. Interviewee 41 spoke about their project participants as having *“seen commercial work, this is the feedback that I get from my participants. When you work with the type of people I work with they will say oh yeah we saw a Christmas show, or they have seen touring work at school, people will have been to a Mamma Mia or an Abba tribute or something like that”*. Going to the cinema and live DJs were often felt to be likely pastimes of the people they were working with, both of which count as cultural participation according to the logics of the SHS.

The interviewees’ responses suggest that at best the individuals taking part in the activities intended to increase cultural participation might be identified as someone who has not participated with that particular organisation or type of activity before. Although from the evidence provided by the interviewees even this was not always the case. This aligns with the findings of the audience data agency, *Purple Seven*, who found that the majority of those making use of discounted tickets intended to attract new audiences were actually those that were already audiences elsewhere (2014). Both the reported practice of the interviewees and the manner in which they spoke of non-participants would suggest that a cultural non-participant is labelled as such based on a range of other factors beyond what types of activities, organisations and individuals they interact with during a year. As such, there are no guarantees that the publicly subsidised activities intended to increase cultural participation would alter the Scottish Government’s national indicator, given that many of these individuals would already count as a cultural participant. This adds further credence to the claim that the identity of the non-participant is not primarily based on what they do or don’t do, but instead on the type of person that a non-participant is assumed to be.

5.1.2 Non-participants are socially-deprived

And so just as was the case at the turn of the twentieth century, those presented as being in most need of undergoing the enriching transformation afforded by

cultural participation are those who are the most materially deprived and/or have the lowest social status – their need for transformation offered as an explanation of their deprivation and low social position. Enriching the lives of the non-participant is therefore synonymous with enriching the individual so that they have the internal resources needed to transform themselves and their life in line with societal norms. This leads to the presumption that cultural non-participants can quite confidently be identified through other demographic characteristics. As Interviewee 41 stated, they felt they did “*make the assumption, if I am perfectly honest, that there are **certain sections of society** that feel they can’t access culture*”. And Interviewee 14 made clear that they have never been funded to work specifically with non-participants, but instead was required to target certain types of people that were *assumed* likely to be non-participants by virtue of some other demographic data marking them out as problematic for the state; evidence of the extent to which the dividing practices of these two institutions continue to be mutually affirming.

It was evident amongst the interviewees that there was a clear common perception of what type of people would be appropriate in this regard. When asked whom their participation activity did focus on, most of those who did this type of work spoke about school children and those who they described as “*socially excluded*”, “*socially deprived*” or “*high on the index of multiple deprivation*”¹²⁹. Interviewees spoke of aligning their work with various trends that had come and gone regarding particular demographic groups that the Scottish Government had shown an interest in targeting - “*there is obviously trends though, that you can very easily pick up, like NEETS*¹³⁰, [laughs] *they were a trend, and young men*” (Interviewee 2); “*There are sort of flavours of the month, trends and fashions [of who to engage with]. Young men... that is quite an interesting one, that has sort of bubbled up recently and prison is another very*

¹²⁹ The Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation identifies small area concentrations of multiple deprivation across all of Scotland in a consistent way. It ranks small areas from most deprived (ranked 1) to least deprived (ranked 6,505). People using the SIMD will often focus on the areas below a certain rank, for example, the 5%, 10%, 15% or 20% most deprived areas in Scotland

¹³⁰ Not in education, employment or training.

popular choice." (Interviewee 38. See also Interviewees 1, 3, 4, 41). Currently, there appeared to be a number of organisations that were focusing on what Interviewee 1 described as "*the elusive 16-24 year old thing that everyone keeps talking about*". This focus exists despite both the broader quantitative research and SHS indicating that those in this age bracket tend to be the most culturally active of any age group. However what all of these cases are indicative of is the search for a non-participant in the sense of searching for a suitable subject to whom the identity could be applied.

Likewise, the transformational potential of cultural participation is almost only ever referenced in relation to that which awaits non-participants rather than those that are not labelled as such. The researcher could find no study that has explored the transformative power of the Arts on the university educated audiences for ballet and opera or the liberal intelligentsia that frequent contemporary arts venues. Presumably this is because they are understood as the type of people who do not need to be transformed, but rather the type of people who non-participants would ideally be transformed into. This was certainly the attitude that was explicitly expressed by some of the interviewees:

[When asked why no one need challenge the interviewer or interviewee on their cultural participation] *Well we can challenge ourselves, can't we? I mean we are finished in that sense, no?* (Interviewee 24)

[When it is pointed out that no one tries to influence the cultural choices of the interviewer as a white middle class educated white man]

Interviewee 7: *Yes, you are allowed to dabble in and out of whatever you like*

Interviewer: *And to say I like that, and I don't like that and the only reason I go is because I like it*

Interviewee 7: *Yeah, **you don't need to be improved***

Interviewer: *I don't need to be improved? My mental health doesn't need addressed? I don't need enlightened or enriched?*

Interviewee 7: *But maybe you are **self-enriching**?*

And it would equally appear that there is no concern about the choices of those who would be recorded as a non-participant in the SHS but are neither socially deprived nor from a minority community. For example, when asked if they would consider doing outreach work with a group of bank workers who only ever watched television, played computer games and read comics (thus statistically a non-participant) interviewees always responded as though this had been said as a joke by the researcher. Thus, if a statistical non-participant changed nothing about their patterns of participation but moved to a different area and got a new job earning an average salary, then as far as the discursive logic of the problem construction is concerned they would cease to be a cultural non-participant.

These same assumptions can be found in the written texts and practices of cultural policy. For example, the Scottish Government argues that cultural activities should be “*targeted at **people at risk** [to] provide diversionary activities and make a positive impact on the incidence of crime and **anti-social behaviour***” (2008). This is a belief not dissimilar to Lord Goodman’s declaration in the late 1960’s that “a dose of culture could turn hooligans into citizens” (Goodman, cited in Mulgan, 1996). Likewise, in discussing their commitment to equalities and diversity, rather than identifying the cultural non-participant, Creative Scotland outlines that regularly funded organisations have a “*specific equalities focus and clear remit to work in **communities with socio-economic deprivation***” (Creative Scotland, 2015h). The implicit assumption, reinforced by statistics like the SHS, is that it is in these communities that the cultural non-participant is to be found, their socio-economic deprivation synonymous with their assumed cultural non-participation.

5.1.3 Non-participants are hard to reach

One of the core components of the subject identity of the non-participant is the suggestion that they are “*hard-to reach*”. It is an assertion that suggests those labelled as a non-participant are in some way more difficult to communicate with than other individuals:

*The non-visitors are generally these people in the **hard to reach** brackets*
(Interviewee 1)

*...the **hard to reach** audience is a luxury that they might tackle if they get project funding.* (Interviewee 5)

*... I mean, I believe myself that it is important to **reach out to the harder to reach** audience... that is also where the money is! [laughs]* (Interviewee 12)¹³¹

The label of being hard to reach is not exclusive to the discourses of cultural policy¹³². A rudimentary search of existing research shows that every state institution appears to have a problem of communicating with a hard to reach audience. Health (Flanagan and Hancock, 2010; Freimuth and Mettger, 1990), education (Day, 2013; Boag-Munroe and Evangelou, 2012), the police (Jones and Newburn, 2001), government (Froonjian and Garnett, 2013) all appear to be struggling with what is often described as a complex issue in need of complex solutions (Boag-Munroe and Evangelou, 2012). Despite this supposed complexity it is generally framed as a question of communication so that appropriate solutions might include such interventions as:

- utilizing knowledge about target audiences;
- forming partnerships with agencies and individuals that interact with targeted populations;
- utilizing children to reach parents and older relatives;
- using 'ethnic media' that effectively reach immigrant and ethnic minority households, and;
- simplifying communication and using feedback techniques (Froonjian and Garnett, 2013).

¹³¹ See Appendix 1.11 for further relevant examples from the data.

¹³² Hard to reach is also used in more general methodology literature, but generally to refer to those that may be more difficult to gain access to as part of a sample e.g. those that are transient or under the guardianship of another.

Or alternatively it is seen as requiring an alternation in the language or terms of engagement (Day, 2013) that are employed when seeking to communicate with what has been understood as a hard to reach group.

And so while representing the cultural non-participant as being hard to reach is not original, it is important. For it contributes significantly towards rendering the problem of cultural non-participation as technical – an inability to access, or communicate with certain people, which if only it can be overcome through specific interventions will then result in a normalization of their activities. There is an implied assumption that once non-participants are reached they would inevitably become a participant. In a technical sense it is about making contact or being present, as evident in the suggestion of Interviewee 20 that their organisation needed to physically visit geographic areas: “...we are just thinking that we **need to reach** all of these parts of the country that can’t physically get to us...”

Yet this technical process of reaching the individuals they wish to participate is not really all that hard, something that has also been argued with regards to the hard to reach audiences of other institutions (Flanagan and Hancock, 2010; Cook, 2002). As the interviewees in a study about participation in policy consultation stated: “*Who says we are hard to reach?*” (Cook, 2002, emphasis in original)¹³³. It is important to remember that the identity of the non-participant is applied to suitable proxies, and so reaching them simply requires identifying a group to label as such. While it may require an investment of resource, the fact that organisations were able to reach individuals that they were happy to classify as non-participants was clear from both the defined demographics that they targeted and the descriptions of work that was done with those groups. Interviewees were able to identify specific postcodes that they would work in and other community organisations that they could partner with in order to reach the supposedly hard to reach. So it appeared from the data generated that

¹³³ The majority of research about hard to reach audiences in the cultural sector tends to be grey literature in which the hard to reach identity is taken for granted. One needs to look to other disciplines to find peer reviewed literature that problematises the notion that someone is hard to reach (Freimuth and Mettger, 1990; Cook, 2002; Day, 2013b).

the hard to reach were never so hard to reach that the organisations failed to do so.

One study in relation to policing suggested that the hard to reach were not so much hard to reach in a physical sense as hard to engage with on a positive level (Jones and Newburn, 2001). However what was implicit in this description was that engaging on a positive level meant that those labelled as hard to reach both acted and interacted in the manner that the institution wanted them to. Indeed twenty five years ago a piece of health research suggested that the hard to reach was a label applied by institutional communicators to those who were both unlike themselves and whose behaviours their communication had failed to change (Freimuth and Mettger, 1990). So what is perhaps a more accurate description of the hard to reach cultural non-participant is that they are those individuals who remain hard to persuade even *after* they are reached – either that they continue to show no interest in participating with what is being offered, or that after participating with what is offered, have no interest in doing so again.

5.1.4 Non-participants think cultural participation is not for them

As such, further explanation is required within the discourse as to why, when reached, the hard to reach remain non-participants. As was discussed in Chapter 2, this is when the concept of barriers is employed, a word that evokes an obstruction to passage, a “*brick wall*” or “*blockage*” as interviewees 14 and 22 respectively said. As has been addressed in Chapters 2 and 3, it is a keyword within the construction of the problem because it frames the non-participant as an excluded and hard to reach minority, keen to participate in the same way that a supposed majority does, but stopped by tangible barriers that the state, through its government sponsored intermediaries, is working to eradicate. This then contributes to those not participating with the Arts as being represented as individuals who have the desire to participate but are limited in their capacity to fulfil that desire. Deploying this keyword is yet another method of rendering the problem technical rather than political, an act that supports the pervasive attempts to present funding for the Arts as a depoliticized process (Gray, 2008).

In so doing, this keyword obscures the existence of an alternative identity for the non-participant: a non-participant that perceives no barriers to participation with the Arts and yet still chooses not to do so because they would rather spend their time doing something else.

This is important because there is a distinction to be made between those who express an interest or desire to participate but who are hindered to some degree from doing so and those who have expressed no interest or desire and identify no absence in their life because of it. For being prevented from doing something you want to do because of tangible barriers such as lack of transport or finance is not the same as choosing not to do something in which you have no interest, place no value, would gain no unique utility; and may even have a detrimental effect through the loss of opportunity to spend that time otherwise. For a barrier arguably only occurs where a desire has been shown to exist and while there may well be some individuals that fit in to this category¹³⁴, it remains the case that a large number of people simply express no interest or desire to participate with the Arts. National and international surveys regularly show that it is lack of interest that is the primary explanation given for not participating (European Commission, 2013b; Charlton *et al.*, 2010; Scottish Government, 2009). Likewise the SHS found that 48% of those labelled as not currently engaged were not interested in participating with the listed activities, and 35% were not interested in attending those mentioned (SAC, 2008).

Acknowledging the potential that this type of non-participant exists would undermine the discursive logic on which the legitimacy of state subsidies for the Arts relies. For while the dominant subject identity for the non-participant can be argued to value that which is receiving subsidy even though they are being prevented from attending, the alternative non-participant identity faces no

¹³⁴ Individuals such as this doubtless exist and the Artlink Access programme is a good example of a scheme that works to support them. However this project leaves the decisions in the hands of the service user. They choose if it is a service they want to make use of and they select the events that they want to go to and how often. Artlink Access does not make any suggestion that people should use their service or curate what someone chooses to see. It is not for the team at Artlink to decide if someone goes to Spiderman or Kafka.

tangible practical or physical barriers and are consequently paying for the provision of activities about which they have no interest and do not value. The construction of the non-participant identity must therefore include an explanation that represents these individuals' disinterestedness as something other than a legitimate position of disesteem for the state supported esoteric interest of a minority. And it is in response to this necessity that the mental or psychological barrier is then employed.

In relation to the problem of non-participation, the phrase 'not for me' or even 'not for the likes of me' is regularly pointed to as evidence that such a psychological barrier exists. It is thus often used as the description of this supposed mental state or attitude, such as when Fiona Hyslop stated that she didn't want people to be constrained by a "*sense that this isn't for me*" (2013). Indeed within the SHS Culture and Sport Module, question 7 asks respondents specifically about the extent to which they agree with the statement that "*Culture and the arts are **not for people like me***" (Scottish Government, 2009). This phrase (or a variation thereof) was identified regularly in the data generated for this study as something that was represented as problematic, accompanied by the assumption that any evidence of this attitude should be challenged:

*...some people are very much at home in that, in that circle, ... but not everyone is ... not everyone thinks that **it's for them*** (Interviewee 1)

*It is important that people in Scotland feel confident about attending a theatre and that they feel **it's for them** [... ...] if you went along and stood outside a football ground and said to them, you know, they are going to say... probably their wives are going to say **it is not for us**, ... yes there is a perception, and that is what we work so hard to break down, and we go out to communities, dress in our black hoodies and we, you know what I mean, we say, **no this is for you** actually [... ...] it is about the ownership of us as a national company on all levels, and people feeling that **we are for them**, we are not just for middle class people* (Interviewee 2)

*I would say that once that person is engaged with a cultural activity and they have had it in the most appropriate location for them, whether it is here, whether it is in a community, whether it is in their own youth centre, and that they have had the right staff with them and they can say then **it is not for them**, then I will be amazed. (Interviewee 3)*

The logic underpinning this aspect of the subject identity of the non-participant suggests that complex societal factors have come to influence what someone does and does not perceive to be for them. As was discussed in Chapter 2, it draws heavily on Bourdieu (1986) and his notion of the *habitus* through which an individual learns the implicit structures of society and how they must behave in order to adhere to these structures and their assumed place within it. The job of state funded organisations and activities becomes about educating people that it is for them, in this sense it becomes about changing their values.

5.1.5 Non-participants don't know what they don't know

As mediated through the policy and professional discourses in the field of cultural policy, the tangible impact that social structuring (what Bourdieu, 1984, conceived of as *habitus*) is implied to have is that the non-participant has always presumed that the Arts are not for them. As such they have never participated or when they have it has been detrimentally affected by their preconditioned attitude towards the experience. Should this be addressed, then they will realise that the Arts is for them, and come to value it as the imagined majority are represented as doing. Once again, this argument has its roots in the nineteenth century, for when faced with the same difficulty in explaining the behaviour of the populace¹³⁵, Mill proposed the same explanation. His justification for why some appeared to prefer the simple pleasures over those that were supposed to afford them greater benefit was, in the first instance, that they had not had the opportunity to experience the higher pleasures and were

¹³⁵ In assessing which of two pleasures (and by association the experiences that afforded these pleasure) should be understood as the greater, Mill's response was that it would be that to which the majority gave a decided preference. His assumption being that this preference would always be for that which was presumed to facilitate ones' growth as a human being. However he appeared to face the same difficulty as today's advocates for the Arts face in explaining why, if this was the case, the majority appeared not to make this value judgement and to opt to do something else.

therefore unable to make an informed judgement. Once one had experienced such pleasures he did not believe that anyone would ever consent to give them up, no matter how much of the simple pleasure they were offered as an alternative:

Few human creatures would consent to be changed into any of the lower animals, for a promise of the fullest allowance of a beast's pleasures; no intelligent human being would consent to be a fool [...] It is better to be a human being dissatisfied than a pig satisfied; better to be Socrates dissatisfied than a fool satisfied. And if the fool, or the pig, are of a different opinion, it is because they only know their own side of the question...(Mill, 2001 [1863], n.p.)

There was certainly an assumption amongst the majority of interviewees that the non-participant was not having, and most likely had not had, the type of experience an interaction with the Arts could offer. Although they acknowledged that this was a presumption and no evidence was given suggesting that any of the interviewees would attempt to find this out in identifying whom to work with in practice. Presenting the non-participant's imagined history of cultural participation in this manner allows a common sense assertion to be made that it is inevitable they do not value the supposedly unique experience of engaging with the Arts if they have never had such a unique experience before. No one values that of which they have no knowledge or understanding, and interviewees stressed the logic of this argument through the use of the oft-repeated phrase "*they don't know what they don't know*":

*....of course they **don't know that they don't know**, that is the irony of education, you **don't know what you don't know until you have learnt that you did not know it**. (Interviewee 21)*

*...it is that thing about **thinking you know what you know**, but actually there is still loads more for you to know... (Interviewee 21)*

*.....because we, because we are not in the business of giving people what they want are we, we are in the business of giving people **things that they didn't know that they wanted**, so to say ok, you can get a ticket for a tenner to the Scottish Opera but you don't want that, to give them the tenner to go and see Madonna would be closing their opportunities down rather than opening them up (Interviewee 4)*

*I think it is about **being challenged** with **stuff that you don't know...** (Interviewee 14)*

The implicit suggestion that this phrase contains is that it is only through participation with the Arts that someone could, in the words of Interviewee 14, “*get it*” and in getting it come to value it and thus continue to participate in the future. There is no option open to the non-participant to “*get it*” and still find no value in it. This also aligns with the rationale of market failure outlined in Chapter 3 and which is commonly drawn upon in attempting to explain the necessity for state intervention in the lives of its citizens. In particular it relates to the possibility of imperfect information, where a suboptimal level of activity with merit goods is explained by the assumed lack of education in, information about, and understanding of, the unique and valuable experience that they offer.

The potential that the non-participant has participated, does “*get it*”, but doesn’t like it is a conundrum that Mill, too, had faced. Because for all that he (and the interviewees) might believe that anyone who has experienced the higher pleasures of the Arts would not willingly then forgo them, in practice this does not appear to be the case. Not all those who do not participate have never in their lives interacted with some manifestation of the Arts. Despite describing the opportunities they provided to non-participants as “*an opportunity to **make the value judgement***” (Interviewee 13) or “*a case of giving them the tools, language and experiences **to critique if this is for them***” (Interviewee 41), the suggestion that someone might not value an experience with the Arts positively was one that that appeared to be difficult to countenance for many of the interviewees. Looking at Interviewee 14’s answer to the question of whether it is ever all right for someone to say something is not for them, it was clear that

they did not want to express the logical conclusion of someone having tried something and found it to be of no value. They quickly shift their narrative to focus on the potential for what they understand to be a positive outcome – “yes *it is perfectly OK for folks to say that it is not for the likes of me... **but then** it is OK for us to go, **well try it again**, [...] and maybe you go, wow I really enjoyed that*”. Likewise, while Interviewee 41 acknowledged the possibility that someone might not value what was being offered, they stressed that this was not really the desired outcome: “*if it is not right for them then absolutely don’t come, make their choices... **but the hope is** that when they encounter it they will*”.

Mill’s answer to this conundrum once again aligns exactly with that still being employed today. For he asserts that in order to make a legitimate judgement the individual must be “competently acquainted” (Mill, 2001 [1863]) suggesting that it is possible to have a sub-standard experience through a lack of competent acquaintance. Such a belief is indicative of the extent to which appreciation is a product of acculturation in which one learns what one should value and why. And this was an argument that the interviewees also adopted. For when it was explicitly suggested that their dislike for an experience should be respected if people had encountered a specific type of activity in the past, or after they had been reached out to and still found no value in what was on offer, the common response was that this would only be the case if the previous interaction had been of the “*right kind*”:

Justifying why current schools programs have not translated into larger audiences for opera] *I always think, you know, for a start it is a **terrible theatrical experience**, in your gym [...], I know that this is a heretic speaking here, but it is absolutely ludicrous to think they are going to sit through, you know, Marriage of Figaro [in a gym hall] (Interviewee 10)*

*...the argument that says everybody has an equal right to this and therefore I am going to do some **bastardised or compromised version** of it just so that is possible for it to be in fifty miles of where everybody lives is nonsense because it’s patronizing, because you are not giving people the*

true experience and there is no point in us pretending that you can do everything everywhere... (Interviewee 19)

*...but given **the right** information before they go, regardless of who they are, then I think they would still enjoy it.* (Interviewee 2)

*Once they have tried it, yeah, and that they have been given the **right teacher** and **the right environment**, [...] I would say that once that person is engaged with a cultural activity and they have had it in the **most appropriate location** for them, whether it is here, whether it is in a community, whether it is in their own youth centre, and that they have had the **right staff** with them and they can say then it is not for them, then I will be amazed* (Interviewee 2)¹³⁶

And so the logic of the problem construction is that once people gain the 'right' knowledge through having been helped to access the 'right' opportunities, provided by the 'right' people then they will inevitably "know enough to appreciate the wonderfulness of the arts that they currently disdain, mistrust or are bored by. They will come to like the right kind of art, and thus be able to enjoy the benefits such arts are presumed to bestow" (Jensen, 2002, p.153). As Interviewee 14 said: *"I go there with the expectation that everybody is going to love this so much that they will connect with it in some way [...] so I worry that it is not making sense to people, because **once it makes sense then automatically you are going to want to do it**".*

However these beliefs are based upon a vicious cycle of discursive logic that means any rejection of that which is subsidised by the state is represented as a result of some structural flaw in the nature of the interaction, or a personal flaw in the knowledge and experience of the person participating, rather than a legitimate and informed expression of their personal taste. As Interviewee 22 said, if you remove all the barriers and the non-participant still doesn't develop an interest then it was important not to "*drop it*" and dismiss the individual as a "*lost cause*". Leaving to one side for a moment the implication that someone who chooses not to do something is 'lost' and the associated implications of failing to

¹³⁶ See Appendix 1.12 for further relevant examples from the data.

keep to the 'right' path with the accompanying risks this brings, what this highlights is the almost impossibility of non-participation to ever be accepted as non-problematic. It is impossible for anyone labelled as a non-participant to legitimately question the value of that which they are being offered. This is in stark opposition to the possible responses available to the subject of the cultural participant, for as shall shortly be discussed, they are granted the agency to decide that an experience was 'right' but it was not for them.

5.2 Discourses of taste

Before the chapter moves on to discuss in closer detail how the subject of the cultural participant is constructed in contrast to that of the non-participant, it is important to consider the role that taste plays within the discourses of cultural participation. In this regard, it should be remembered that outside of the discourse of inadequate participation the identities of the cultural participant and non-participant do not exist. Differing patterns of participation are explained with reference to the idea of personal taste and individual preference, and some of the research that supports these logics was discussed in Chapter 2. However when these differences are written upon as part of the problem of non-participation, taste becomes an attribute of the cultural participant alone, the non-participant's lack of taste associated with their assumed lack of appreciation for the aesthetic. As shall be argued below, the cultural participant is allowed to express taste, because their discursive identity affords them the ability to have Taste.

5.2.1 Why non-participation does not always make you a non-participant

As has been discussed, non-participation is discursively explained through the characteristics of the non-participant subject identity. In particular it is represented as the result of psychological barriers that results in a 'not for me' attitude that needs to be changed through targeted intervention by the state. Such an attitude, and its associated psychological barrier, is often evidenced in research into this subject by pointing towards these sorts of statements:

[Discussing why they don't go to the opera] *Because I am thinking that I am going to be bored half way through because it is **just not my thing**.*

*Opera and theatre are **not really my bag***

***I hate ballet and I hate opera** with an absolute passion*

*I am **not a great fan** of the ballet I am afraid, I like opera but not ballet, quite **why that is I don't know!***

*I don't really go to much classical music; I don't really go to concerts much at all [Interviewer: Why?] I don't like it [laughs] ... I don't like it, there you go, **I don't really understand it, so I don't really like it***

*I've never been big on live music for example, I'm not big on opera, I'm not big on cinema, possibly I am a bit of a.... actually **I don't know how engaged with culture I am, it's a good question... not hugely I guess.***

[Talking about classical music] *I barely glance at it [a festival programme] because **it isn't my thing***

[When asked if there is anything they don't engage with] *Yeah, opera [laughs] probably....opera and... most dance and more florid classical music. [When asked if they had been to an opera] Yes, many years ago, as a child, **a childhood trauma** [laughs]*

These quotes are not unusual for a study of this kind that focuses on cultural participation. However what makes these quotes of particular interest is that they are not from individuals who would typically be labelled as non-participants. Rather, these are the opinions of some of those that were interviewed for this study, individuals working in publically funded organisations, each with a degree of responsibility for trying to alter the choices that others make. Whether someone is classified as socially deprived, an outreach and engagement officer, or the director of a national cultural organisation it would appear that they may well share similar opinions about the opera or a night at the ballet. Despite indications that psychological barriers to altering pre-existing patterns of cultural participation are faced by the majority (Acacia Avenue, 2013; Keaney, 2008), in the discursive logics of the

problem they are almost solely associated with the subject of the non-participant. In turn, it is only ever those that have already been categorised as non-participants who have their patterns of cultural participation questioned and are thus asked to provide explanations as to why they are different from others.

For some of the interviewees this apparent irony was in no way problematic, and in fact one of the “*funny things*” about those who work in the sector. Interviewee 21 recalled a colleague that used to say “*I work in the arts, I don’t go to the arts*” while explaining that they felt those working in the Arts are primarily interested in their own field of activity and rarely go outside of it, a belief that is supported by the findings of Jancovich (2015b). Another said they didn’t worry that although their job was primarily about getting people to come to the theater, they “*don’t even go to the theatre [themselves] as a choice*” (Interviewee 14). In addition, one spoke of the fact that while they went “*to a lot of stuff*” it was only “*because I get comp tickets, I don’t think I would go otherwise*” (Interviewee 30). Indeed this was a factor that appeared to influence the participation patterns of a number of other interviewees¹³⁷. If it is remembered that only 5% of the Scottish population attends the opera in any one year, and only 4% go to the ballet, then it is perhaps not surprising that so few of those working in roles that are funded to support cultural participation are not themselves participating with substantial swathes of that which receives subsidy. As Bennett *et. al.* have argued: “much of the middle class is not itself strongly attached to, conversant with, or engaged in the activities that mark legitimate culture” (2010, p.252). Perhaps even more surprisingly, the same might be said about many of those working in the Arts.

¹³⁷ While Interviewee 30 was the only one to openly state that they would not go to certain activities if they were required to pay, it is interesting to note that a number of the interviewees did state that working in a cultural organisation and/or getting access to free or reduced tickets was an influencing factor on their own choices. For example Interviewee 38 stated that because they worked in theatre, they “*see everything because I don’t have to pay*” and that with regards to other art forms they were less likely to spend money to go and see them (see also Interviewees 1, 8, 11, 12, 14, 17, 18, 20, 30, 38, 41).

There also appeared to be little consideration of the degree to which logically, the argument that you don't know what you don't know would not solely apply to the non-participant but to everyone: the researcher; interviewees; artists; policymakers; and all those that the SHS classifies as participating with culture. The argument of habitus works for 'us' as well as 'them', because the learnt behaviours of those labelled as cultural participants may equally be acting as a barrier to their participation with experiences that would significantly enrich their lives. Take for example Interviewee 26 who said of themselves elsewhere in the interview: *"I think for music, definitely I am really bad at going to new things, it will be based on what I know...it is **always based on what I know**".* Likewise, Interviewee 41 said when challenged on their own narrow patterns of participation: *"I am sure that like millions of people in this country, by the time I have done a full weeks work [... ...] **none of us want to spend money on stuff we are not sure about**".* An opinion very similar to interviewee 38's description of their own tendency to stick with what they knew: *"If someone was going to give me a free ticket I might go to a classical concert, but if I am going to make a choice about what to spend money on then **I am going to stay with things that I am already comfortable with** and for me theatre and dance is at the top of that list".* All of which is further evidence of the extent to which the negative characteristics associated with the non-participant identity can be identified in those individuals who, for other reasons, have not been identified as a societal problem requiring state sponsored alteration of their choices.

5.2.2 Taste as personal preference

When asked why it was OK for them to say that something was not for them, interviewees offered a variety of responses but common amongst these answers was the extent to which they stressed their own identity, their own agency and their own freedom to express that identity and agency through their taste:

*I'm perfectly able **as an individual** to be able to decide what, what I would and wouldn't do and maybe I am reluctant to try stuff or whatever, but you know, ultimately I'm happy with that and it's my decision, and you know*

I'm grown up and ugly enough to decide what I want to engage with myself (Interviewee 3)

[Talking about a genre of theatre that they dislike] *I just mean that, you know, that **taste** has to come into it in the end you know. I like going to live performances, but not all live performances and that's fair enough....* (Interviewee 19)

[talking about opera] *...if someone tried to...open that up to me...yeah I would probably be like, mmmmm, no thanks, **I'm quite happy** not going!* [laughs] (Interviewee 18)

[When asked why they chose doing one activity over another] *Well I suppose that is **personal taste*** (Interviewee 5)

[Talking about why they dislike ballet and opera] *I think it is because **my preference** is language...* (Interviewee 26)

[Talking about why they choose to do the things they do] *I have to have a **personal investment** of some sort and recognise how that activity can satisfy that need or that desire* (Interviewee 41)¹³⁸

As can be seen from these quotes, in supporting their own value judgments interviewees were quick to invoke their personal sovereignty as justification. They appeared to feel that not only was it appropriate but also that they were fully able to make choices that were reflective of an autonomous self. This ability to express agency through taste was not something that the interviewees entirely denied others, they recognised that their own tastes may not be the taste of others and that it would not always be apparent why someone had the taste that they did:

... if you look at it from the point of view of those people who use the opera they might wonder whether I am able to get my fulfillment elsewhere [laughs] *I guess from my part I don't know why I don't like it so... that's why I don't go, I wouldn't get anything out of it, I don't know what they are getting out of it... as much, I suppose as someone who doesn't engage with the cinema doesn't know what I am getting out of it...* (Interviewee 3)

¹³⁸ See Appendix 1.13 for further relevant examples from the data.

...and there are all sorts of personal tastes which are perfectly legitimate you know, some quite intelligent people I know don't like opera, I find that mystifying but there you go! (Interviewee 19)

It is absolutely fine in my book if you try it and you don't want to go any further with it, I personally would find it disappointing but I can live with it. (Interviewee 38)

If that is their choice, that's fair enough, I choose not to go to the cinema, it's not that I can't access, I just begrudge paying the price and I am comfier on my sofa. I don't know if that is too simplistic, but.... (Interviewee 41)

Despite it being suggested that it was difficult to really understand the taste of others, there was no suggestion that having different taste was in any way indicative of some form of bad taste. Taste was only ever related to individual preference and no mention was made about the taste of any type of social group; as might be expected from the standard sociological theories of taste as refinement associated with writers such as Weber, Simmel and Bourdieu. Neither was there any evidence of the sort of discriminatory prejudices common in the eighteenth century that suggested some groups of people lacked the capacity or means to acquire and exhibit taste (Shiner, 2001). Nor was any explicit attempt made to construct a universal or transcendental taste based on the *types* of activities that someone preferred. Indeed a number of interviewees acknowledged that for a great number of people what went on at their organisation would be of no interest to them:

*I think that ... I would hate to put a number on it but... you know you're probably looking at **eighty percent or something like that, of the population of Edinburgh that couldn't give a shit about what we do** and never would, because it is not for everybody (Interviewee 3)*

*So actually **there are only very specific groups that we can engage with seriously**. If we were, if we did rap then I could engage with a much broader spectrum of young people, but we are not (Interviewee 21)*

*And I think there has to be some kind of discussion around that, **the reason people don't come to the theatre might be because they are just not interested*** (Interviewee 38)

*...But also, **not everyone wants to go to see us, not everyone wants to come to a museum**, we are completely surrounded by loads of different media, by loads of different things to do, and you know, everyone's competing [...]it's quite deluded to think that every family is going to want to come to the museum, that every child is going to get something out of it, you would hope that, but not necessarily, there are lots of other things to do.* (Interviewee 1)

So based upon this apparent acceptance that not everything is for everyone, when the interviewees were asked directly if it was OK for people to say that something was not for them then the majority of interviewees initially felt that it was OK:

*I don't like the idea that we are force feeding culture to anybody, so **yes it is perfectly OK for folks to say that it is not for the likes of me*** (Interviewee 14)

*...Does it matter that 95% of people aren't [participating]? **No, not if they don't want to, no...*** (Interviewee 4)

*...some people just might not ever want to explore, you know might try everything and go, you know, what I am interested in is football...**and that's OK*** (Interviewee 22)

*I think **there are lots of people that are just not interested, and that is OK with me*** (Interviewee 21)

*I think by the same token **it is fine that not everyone wants to access culture**. There is stuff that I am not bothered about going to see* (Interviewee 41)¹³⁹

However, when the researcher highlighted the apparent inconsistency of recognising their own right to decide what sort of activities were of value,

¹³⁹ See Appendix 1.14 for further relevant examples from the data.

accepting that it was OK for others to find those same things to have no value for them, while professionally questioning and attempting to alter the tastes of others through constructing them as a problem, the response shifted to one in which they and the organisations they represented had a legitimate right to challenge the subjective choices of others:

*...Ok, so yes, OK, it's perfectly OK for folks to say it's not for the likes of me but then it is OK for us [those working in the Arts] to go, well try it, or **educate and challenge that expectation that it is not for the likes of you....*** (Interviewee 14)

Not only is this further evidence of the extent to which within the logic of the problem construction it is appropriate and indeed required for state sponsored intermediaries to attempt to alter the values of others, but also of the degree to which modernity has made “organized freedom compulsory” (Adorno, 1977, p.190) and in so doing allowed society, and in particular the representatives of the state, to make judgments about how one spends one’s ‘free time’. Where diversity of any kind is acknowledged, it is only to the extent that it “can act in the service of uniformity” (Connor, 1992, p.4).

5.2.3 Taste as an appreciation for the aesthetic

Yet this renders the idea of taste highly problematic. If the interviewee wouldn’t go to the ballet or take part in some cosplay¹⁴⁰ at ComicCon and that’s ok, if they recognise the potential for individual taste and the resultant diversity of preference that it engenders, how can they justify their professional practice in which they challenge someone else’s decision not to come to the gallery or theatre that they work in? The answer lies, somewhat obtusely, in a different discourse of Taste¹⁴¹. As had been the case when talking about cultural participation, it was evident that interviewees employed a different discourse the more that the discussion was explicitly related to their professional practice and the problem of non-participation. While talking in the discourse of

¹⁴⁰ Dressing up as a favorite character, often from comics or science fiction programs/films.

¹⁴¹ Capitalisation will be used to aid the reader in distinguishing which is being discussed.

abundant participation, the interviewees appeared able to accept the legitimacy of personal taste and subjective choice. However, once the discussion was situated within the discourse of inadequate participation then certain expressions of personal taste became an indicator of social inequality and in need of challenge and alteration. Once again there is a long historical precedence of recognising the legitimacy of someone's subjective tastes for that which they found entertaining, recreational or distracting, while simultaneously acknowledging that not everyone's subjective tastes included Taste for what is implicitly represented as a distinct and ultimately more valuable type of experience.

To understand the apparent dual discourses of taste, one must once again look to the eighteenth century, at which point an alternative discourse of Taste emerged and which became part of the founding discourses of the Arts. As Shiner notes: "taste had always been an irremediably social concept, concerned as much with food, dress, and manners as with beauty or the meaning of nature" (2001, p.131). However as has been discussed in Chapter 4, in the eighteenth century an important split took place that divided the "satisfactions of utility and diversion from the special kind of pleasure that came to be called aesthetic" (Shiner, 2001, p.131). While taste in relation to the former continued to be seen as subjective, informed by the senses and related to individual experience – what Kant has been translated as calling the pleasant or agreeable – in relation to the latter, Taste was rather oxymoronically understood as subjectively universal. It was understood as adhering to standards that were absolute, located at the supersensible substrate of nature (Carey, 2005) and thus part of the *sensus communis* or common sensory and intellectual powers of humanity.

What made this objective and universal Taste for the higher pleasures of the aesthetic experience subjective was that while in principle everyone is capable of possessing and exhibiting it, most will not because they are (for various reasons depending on the perspective of the writer) unable or prevented from doing so. Distanced from the sensory pleasures, this Taste manifested itself in

sensitivity for the beautiful, the aesthetic and ultimately, the Arts. Unlike subjective taste for the everyday pleasure of the agreeable that was seen as being motivated by an individual having a utilitarian stake in the object - be that practical, recreational or moral - an aesthetic Taste was marked by the disinterested manner that one exhibited towards the experience. It was as much if not more about what one valued the experience *for* as what one was having an experience *with*. In this regard it is evidence of the continued presence of the “absolute distinction between pleasure and value” (Connor, 1992, p.37) that has been integral to the idea of the unique aesthetic experience since its conception.

5.3 Constructing the cultural participant

While it was clear that within the discourse of abundant participation the legitimacy of individual taste could be recognised, within the discourse of inadequate participation someone must exhibit Taste if they are to be considered a cultural participant. Yet as Chapter 2, and in particular the logic of the cultural omnivore has made clear, exhibiting Taste is not simply a matter of participating in a clearly defined list of activities. Given that there were clear differences between what all of the interviewees stated they participated with and an open dismissal by some of that which would once have been understood as canonical cultural participation, any attempt to understand Taste in this manner quickly unravels. So how is it suggested within the discursive logic of the problem that this Taste for the enriching and transformative pleasures of the Arts manifests itself in contemporary society?

The remainder of this chapter offers an answer to this question by returning to the observation that in defining the non-participant, interviewees did not solely focus on the non-participant's actions (what they do or do not do in practice) but far more on their attitude towards leisure time activities. As shall be discussed below, in opposition to their own identity, interviewees represented the non-participants as closed minded, conservative and unwilling/unable to challenge themselves. In particular there were three things that were stressed as being different between themselves (as cultural participants whose taste

exhibited Taste) and the subject of the non-participant. Firstly, they suggest that their own patterns of cultural participation showed that they had a diversity of interests and openness towards trying new things. Secondly, interviewees felt that they were able to challenge themselves on what they did not know or had not done and thus implicitly had all of the knowledge required to do so. Finally, although they may have no interest in certain activities, the interviewees would never dismiss them outright – they stressed that they both valued their existence and the opportunity to potentially interact with them at some unspecified point in the future. This was why, no matter how similar their choices may be to those of the non-participant, they are to be understood as a subject whose attitude exhibits a desirable model of agency that need not be challenged.

5.3.1 Cultural participants are open and omnivorous

The extent to which the interviewees perceived diversity of interests and openness to new activities to be positive traits was stressed by the regularity with which they were highlighted directly after the dismissal of another activity. It appeared to be offered as evidence that interviewees were not narrow-minded in their tastes in the manner that non-participants are, the interviewees' expressed openness discursively negating their stated disinterest:

*I wouldn't be that interested in doing things like that [boybands], **but generally I would give everything a go**, I have been to opera, theatre, you know, most things that are considered [... ...]I'm very eclectic in things that I like" (Interviewee 20)*

*I don't go to that many classical music concerts, but I am **open minded** and I have been to lots of different things (Interviewee 12)*

*"No, I probably am **open to most things**, I have a very small amount of time, and I don't have a lot of cash, so it's kind of... I will try most things... though loud rock music probably isn't my, preferred cultural experience though (Interviewee 5)*

[Opera and musical theatre] *that is something I find really difficult to engage with [...]* Other than that I think **most things I am interested in experimenting with**, especially things I haven't ever kind of had a great deal of experience with, new music, new theatre, new forms of dance for instance, things that I have never had much experience of in my life [...] **whether I would actively choose to book tickets though is perhaps a different thing** (Interviewee 22)¹⁴²

This is indicative of the degree to which the ethos of omnivorousness (Friedman, 2012; Warde and Gayo-Cal, 2009; Warde *et al.*, 2008; Sullivan and Katz-Gerro, 2007; Sintas and Álvarez, 2002; Peterson and Kern, 1996; Peterson, 1992) carries a positive connotation both within the field of cultural policy and beyond. It can be discursively employed as evidence of the Taste that results in the type of cultural participation that contributes towards ones' growth as a valued citizen. The interviewees can therefore un-problematically dismiss certain cultural activities out of hand given their simultaneous claim to an open and omnivorous identity sets their own attitude apart from the not for me attitude of the non-participant.

*Interviewee 8: I would prefer not to be going to certain styles of music concerts but it is selective within art forms, **there is nothing that I am like, I don't go to that***

Interviewer: What sort of styles of music?

*Interviewee 8: Jazz, World Music, most world Music. Yeah, there are certain...I mean **I would really try to not go and see anything to do with contact improvisation dance** or, you know, any of that kind of...the dance, movement psychotherapy end of performance*

*I don't know... I am quite up for anything really. I guess I like, pick and choose what bands and what shows I go to see and you are always making choices [... ...] **I probably wouldn't choose certain kinds of films either.*** (Interviewee 26)

***I am open-minded and I have been to lots of different things**, but I am sure you could give me an example now and I would say no, I wouldn't be*

¹⁴² See Appendix 1.15 for further relevant examples from the data.

interested in going to that. Musical Theatre, I wouldn't go to that.
(Interviewee 12)

As noted in Chapter 4, interviewees often presented themselves and the work they did as assisting non-participants to “*be more open*” and “*try new things out*” so that they could “*challenge themselves*”. However it is interesting to note that with regards to their own participation, Interviewee 22 associates being stretched and challenged with doing the type of activity that they happened to prefer, rather than in doing new things. This is in contradiction to the argument they had made about the value of stretching oneself that they had previously used to explain that state subsidises for the Arts were important because they encouraged people to take part in *new* things that they would not do otherwise. Using the logic of this argument, if art-house cinema is something with which the interviewee is already comfortable, then continuing to interact with it will be less challenging for them and they should be seeking to stretch their repertoire of cultural participation in a different direction. However this was not how they represented it and implied that they were able to stretch themselves through participation with that which they preferred and were most familiar. Indeed when explicitly asked, many interviewees didn’t feel that they were challenged to change or expand their cultural participation in any way, but perhaps more importantly, that this even mattered:

[When asked if they were challenged to change their cultural participation] *No, that is interesting isn't it, do I get challenged? Well I suppose, you get that thing when you buy a ticket for something it says you enjoyed this, why not try that and I tend to think why don't you sod off, but yeah that is interesting...* (Interviewee 4)

[When asked if their cultural engagement was pushed and challenged] *No, because I can shut my eyes to it and get on with my daily life...*
(Interviewee 5)

No I have never been to see a ballet and I shouldn't have to do that, this is the thing, no one is going to be on my case about it because I work in the arts, no one is worried about me. (Interviewee 41)

This was not a problem for them because they did not perceive themselves as being in need of assistance in this regard, as Interviewee 24 said: *"I mean we are finished in that sense, no?"* Returning to the supposed transformative power of the Arts, it should be noted that when asked about their own cultural participation and why they participated, none of the interviewees indicated they did it because they felt they needed to be transformed – that was only ever presented as something that others were in need of. Ollivier (2008) has argued that this is because the same social discourses around the type of subjectivities and qualities that are desirable or undesirable in contemporary society also associate privilege with openness. This has the performative effect of making those with the greatest status and privilege in society open by default. The current research would add to this assertion in suggesting that there is also a cycle of discursive affirmation between openness, cultural participation with the Arts and privilege.

Given the extent to which some interviewees had spoken about a seminal experience from the past, the implication is that they have already gained from the transformative benefits of the Arts, hence why they have a relative position of privilege in society and are thus able to claim openness to more participation with the Arts in future while simultaneously rejecting in the present much that the non-participant is judged for avoiding. The result is a variation of what Jones has described as liberal bigotry (2012) whereby the discursive identity of those with the greatest status allows them to make judgements about the subjective choices of others while still claiming to remain progressively minded and staunchly egalitarian. To be labelled as lacking such qualities is to be designated as having less value or worth to society (Oakley & O'Brien, 2015; Lamont, 2012) and for any inequalities to be explained as being a result of this.

5.3.2 Cultural participants can challenge their own cultural participation habits

As such, while the cultural non-participant requires an external agent to challenge them, the interviewees (and anyone labelled as a cultural participant) are understood as being able to challenge themselves:

I go places to be challenged, I go places to get challenged on what I perceive to be the blocks I have. (Interviewee 21)

...but if I decide to consciously change that [lack of challenge] then I know where to look for information... (Interviewee 5)

I can go and watch an hours' worth of static and come out thinking that was interesting whereas most people would run screaming from the building, but I think that is just because I have got so used to that, so that is what stretches me, so it is kind of about personal maps... (Interviewee 22)¹⁴³

The interviewees appear to be suggesting that they have somehow solved the problem most famously explicated by Donald Rumsfeld. Not only are they aware of the known unknowns, they are also aware of the unknown unknowns and thus are able to seek out and challenge themselves to do that about which they have no awareness or concept of. It can only be assumed that they know of everything that they don't know given that they presented themselves as being self-stretching by dint of their knowledge about where they need to be stretched and how to do it, even if they have no plans to do it in the near future. This is indicative of the extent to which within the contemporary societal discourse of openness as a positive trait, what is most valued "is the **capacity and willingness** to learn and to choose as opposed to the inability or unwillingness to do so" (Ollivier 2008, p.124, emphasis added). By representing themselves as being critically reflective around their own cultural participation, the interviewees once again signify that their own patterns of cultural participation are not problematic no matter how particular or subjective they

¹⁴³ See Appendix 1.16 for further relevant examples from the data.

may appear in practice. Whatever they opt to label as cultural participation is validated by their espousal of an omnivorous attitude, and it was therefore part of their identity as a “*finished*” cultural participant that they were allowed to set their own boundaries within which they could challenge themselves.

5.3.3 Cultural participants are open to appreciating everything

Finally, it is implied that when it comes to exhibiting Taste, ones’ attitude towards cultural participation is as important as the composition of one’s omnivorousness. As was discussed in Chapter 4, when asked why participation with culture should be encouraged, interviewees tended to speak of the potential for “*life-changing experiences*” (Interviewee 38) and “*meaningful transformational engagement*” (Interviewee 12). Almost none spoke of seeking enjoyment, entertainment, joy or fun, the type of words that John McGrath might associate with what he called a good night out (1981). This is indicative of the extent to which, within the discourse of inadequate participation, legitimate cultural participation is associated with valuing the activity in a manner that adheres to the institutional discourses of the Arts and thus requires one to stress the unique and transformative capacities of cultural participation. This is important because, as has already been discussed, the legitimization of public subsidy for the Arts is not based upon providing entertainment or enjoyment, but in offering an experience that transcended such simple pleasures for the greater good of society. While Peterson and Kern originally argued that the omnivore is not required to like everything indiscriminately, but to show openness to appreciating everything (1996), it is also important that their appreciation is based on something greater than its potential for entertainment. For what appears, for many of the interviewees, to be one of the specific distinguishing factors between their own identity and that of the non-participant is the extent to which they express acceptance of the premise of ‘cultural spinach’ (Jensen, 2003), knowing that even if you don’t enjoy much of that which receives state subsidy, it is something you should value for its unique capacities and show a willingness to try even if you never do. In Foucault’s terms, they have come to accept the technologies of the self (2003b [1982])

through which one is expected to observe, analyse and interpret oneself¹⁴⁴, and in so doing interiorise the authority of a governmental society and the values that it seeks to reproduce.

And so espousing openness and support to all that receives state subsidy appeared to be as important, if not even more so, than enacting openness. The most effective way to perform openness appears to be affirming that you value the existing relationship between the state and the Arts. Because for all that adopting the discourse of omnivorousness provides a liberal and egalitarian veneer suggesting a denial of any hierarchy of value (Bennett *et. al.* 2009, p.255), distinctions do remain. Although diversity of activity was stressed as a positive thing by the interviewees it was not simply indiscriminate diversity that was being proposed. While it would appear that to claim the mantle of a legitimate omnivore your particular cultural soup could and indeed should include elements of what the recent class survey of the UK (Savage, 2014) has called emergent culture, it appears even more essential that it also include interactions with the state subsidised activities and organisations that are the manifestations of the Arts.

As such, the interviewees' responses suggest a discursive adherence to a compositional rather than volume based understanding of omnivorousness (Warde *et. al.* 2007) in which what you do does still continue to matter. This is because, as was discussed in Chapter 3, within the discourse of abundant participation the subject of the non-participant cannot exist as it is ostensibly impossible not to participate with culture. Indeed within this discourse the volume of cultural participation exhibited by someone labelled as a non-participant in the discourse of inadequate participation could conceivably be the

¹⁴⁴ For a number of the interviewees, the extent to which they had internalized these technologies was evident in the guilt they felt at not having had, or not enjoying certain state funded cultural experiences: "*I think, I do feel that, I get festival fear when the brochure comes in, I think there is a perception that you should be doing things*" (Interviewee 1. See also Interviewee 5,8,14,25,32).

same or more than someone who was labelled as a cultural participant¹⁴⁵. Yet in order for the Arts to have a societal problem that it can address it must be implied that the lives of non-participants are lacking in some degree and that this lack can only be addressed by patterns of participation that include some interaction with the state subsidised manifestations of the Arts. And so cultural participation policies continue to focus on the state maximising opportunities for lower status individuals to extend their knowledge and exposure to selected activities about which they may (or may not) currently know little. However they are always those activities to which those with greater status have discursively attached the higher pleasures of the aesthetic and which their own participation with, and knowledge of, in turn affirms the legitimacy of their higher status and their ability to assert what forms of cultural participation are of higher value.

Summary

This chapter has argued that cultural participants are assumed to be either sufficiently enriched, or if not, the combination of their knowledge, openness and inquisitive character means that they are adequately equipped to both enrich themselves and guide others in their own enrichment. It is therefore the cultural participation patterns of those implicitly understood as cultural participants that are represented as being a manifestation of Taste and thus represented as normal, desirable and enriching. On the other hand, the cultural participation patterns of those labelled as non-participants, who are primarily those with less advantage and of lower social status, are relegated to being a symptom of their inequality and a partial explanation of their failure to succeed.

This is accepted even if observation would suggest that the participation patterns of the most advantaged were as likely to be as calcified as anyone else's. The difference in part is because the relative status of those accepted as cultural participants reduces the degree to which their activities will be

¹⁴⁵ As Interviewee 5 stated when considering the exclusion of certain creative activities from the SHS: *"on this basis my son is probably more culturally engaged than me because he plays computer games every day."*

watched, noticed or questioned. For within modern societies the lower one's status the greater one's activities are monitored and judged. This is a phenomenon that Foucault described as descending individualism whereby those that can employ the least power are increasingly individualized and problematised while the workings of power becomes more anonymous (1977, p.192). It is a process that is facilitated because of the extent to which those that can exert the greatest power over the field are able to control the conditions of their own critique and in so doing maintain their own privilege.

This power also extends to being able to write the identities of those who can exert less power, and thus the non-participant is represented as equivalent to the type of person that Warde *et.al.* (2007) have described as the unassuming omnivore and whose choices are implicitly assumed to be overly narrow, closed minded and prone to a stubborn and unthinking dismissal of whole categories of cultural activity:

It is much healthier, it is absolutely healthy when you talk about a particular range, or a particular art form and you say, I like this, but I don't like that, but it is when people say I just don't, I dismiss the whole area of cultural activity, I am not prepared to engage, participate, even vaguely think about it, and that is this sort of brick wall that somehow you want to take down, they may not want to go there, but you just want them to see it or whatever... (Interviewee 17)

The lack of knowledge, experience, openness and/or willingness to learn that is represented as core components of the subject identity of the non-participant presents theirs as a flawed subjectivity, problematises their agency, and represents them as being in need of the input of expert mediation to guide their leisure time choices. As the rest of logics in the problem construction make clear, such state sponsored interventions would not only be for their own good, but also for the good of society.

Chapter 6 shall now go on to argue that representing the non-participant in this way has the effect of denying the capacity of certain people to legitimately make an equal contribution to the field of cultural policy. The manner in which those who can exert the greatest power within the field manage the subject identity of the non-participant allows them to co-opt their voice and silence their speech. Despite evidence that suggests the public are often far more open to risk taking than commonly suggested (Fennell *et al.*, 2009) and when presented with various options will often take the “most unusual and radical solution” (Jancovich, 2015b, p.12), the constructed identity of the non-participant helps maintain the discourse of an ignorant and risk adverse individual whose parochial preferences would lead to the dumbing down of cultural provision, to the detriment of everyone. In so doing, cultural policy remains dominated by a group of cultural professionals whose position is constantly affirmed by those whose participation preferences enjoy significantly more direct state support than most.

Chapter 6 – Asymmetric relations of power

In Chapter 5 it was argued that the subject identity of the non-participant is constructed in such a manner as to represent them as lacking in knowledge and thus closed to the unique benefits that they would gain from exhibiting the same patterns of cultural participation that those with the greatest status in society are assumed to do. This is valuable to the institution of the Arts because denying the agency of those labelled as non-participants neutralizes the potential that their choices will be recognised as a legitimate expression of disesteem and dissatisfaction for how state subsidies to support cultural participation are currently distributed. An action that could be understood as political is rendered technical, and those ill served by the status quo are forever understood as potential participants and thus potential benefactors of that which the Arts are subsidised on the basis of providing.

Affirming the existence of the non-participant and their difference to themselves is thus even more vital to those for whom the demise of the Arts as a unique realm of human activity would be accompanied by the loss of status that its institutional relationship with the state grants them. Because anyone employing and thus affirming the discursive logic of non-participation simultaneously constructs the subject of the non-participant in such a manner as to deny anyone labelled as such the right to speak in relation to cultural policy. In so doing any claim they may have to a more equitable distribution of state support is neutralised.

This is important because for all that existing research can point towards the asymmetric power relationships in the field of cultural policy, far less has been considered in relation to how such an imbalance has been maintained in the face of increasing calls for public involvement in the decision making processes of public bodies. There is a lack of focus on the specific acts of power that ensure that irrespective of how regularly cultural policy is criticised as elitist and unequal (Warwick Commission, 2015; Stark *et al.*, 2013, 2014; Jensen, 2002; Dodd, 1995) it remains dominated by a narrow group of decision makers that maintain the status quo.

This final chapter of analysis will argue that the affirmation and management of the non-participant identity is one such act of power that maintains such asymmetric power relations. It will be argued that it is an act of power conducted by those individuals whose access to the discursive identity of a cultural professional with concomitant claims to expert knowledge, allows them to make statements about the cultural participation patterns of others in such a manner as to affirm their own elevated and necessary position within the field. While the chapter continues with a discussion about the extent to which this means that cultural participation policies might best be understood as performative practice, it concludes by arguing that the effects of such discursive subjectification are not limited to the field in which it is constructed and maintained. In so doing, the chapter will specifically address research questions 7 - How do the constructions of these subjects contribute to the resilience of the problem construction? And 8 - What effects does constructing non-participation as a problem have on social relations in the real?

6.1 Cultural policy: a dominated field

As was outlined in Chapter 2, research about inequalities in cultural participation tends to focus on questions of access, in particular, access to certain manifestations of the Arts. However, there is a second, although less expansive body of work that considers inequality with regards to access to the means of professional cultural production (see O'Brien & Oakley, 2015 for a summary). Furthermore, in his discussion on culture and class, Holden focuses on a different understanding of cultural participation altogether, one which is less concerned with the specific activities with which someone is participating and more with the capacity to participate in "helping to define what culture means" (2010, p.13). The importance of this extends beyond the immediate field of cultural policy because, as Oakley and O'Brien (2015) stress, culture plays a significant role in systems of social stratification that differentiate individuals on the basis of their societal value and worth. Oakley and O'Brien are therefore right to argue, "the question of who gets to make [professional] cultural products is a profoundly relevant one" (2015, p.3). But so is that of who makes

cultural policy decisions, for cultural policy making is an important site at which power relationships affect cultural production and practice both materially and discursively. It is to a discussion of how cultural policy remains a field dominated by a narrow network of cultural professionals that the first portion of this chapter now turns.

6.1.1 The existence of a cultural elite

Exploring why the published rates of cultural participation appear unchanged despite the significant policy focus it has received in recent years, Jancovich (2011, 2015b, 2015a) has undertaken work that considers the inequality of influence faced by some with regards to cultural policy making¹⁴⁶. She argues that the invitation to participate rarely extends as far as involvement in the decision making process around the organisations and activities that receive public subsidy. Likewise, Anberree, *et. al.* (2015) have argued that participatory projects do little to change the core operations of subsidised organisations, finding public participation to be “marginal and fragmentary, characterised by a specific and ad-hoc structure” (2015, p.40). While acknowledging the potential for cultural policy to tend towards a path-dependency model, Jancovich makes use of Lukes (2005) argument that elites will always dominate policy decisions, to propose that an elite continue to wield the greatest influence over cultural policy despite some isolated attempts to widen the range of voices involved in decision making. Her conclusion is that resistance to change from parts of the arts sector, combined with decision making processes that ignore the inequalities of power inherent to them are the “greatest barriers to increasing participation” (2015b, p.13). However her analysis does not offer a significant discussion about what these inequalities of power are and how they might work. Such under theorisation makes disrupting such power relations far more difficult as it risks any attempt to do so simply maintaining the logic of the existing relationships, albeit with alternative faces adopting the various existing discursive subject positions available.

¹⁴⁶ Specifically her work has focused on the operation of cultural organisations and distribution of public funds.

6.1.2 Great men of culture, snobs and neo-mandarins

In order to consider how elites have managed to maintain such control over the field of cultural policy, one must first consider who these elite are. Although research can often focus on the fact that the cultural sector is disproportionately composed of a social and economic elite (O'Brien and Oakley, 2015, Oakley and O'Brien, 2015; Warwick Commission, 2015; Hesmondhalgh and Saha, 2013; Jones, 2012), this overlooks the fact that irrespective of their demographic background, the very nature of the Arts requires the existence of a *cultural* elite. As has been discussed in Chapter 4, the constitution of the Arts created a specific sphere of practice in which the individual was divorced from their experiences, thereby creating a market in which reunification could only occur through the action of an intermediary. And so the presumption of management by some elite has, since its inception, been endemic to the institution of the Arts. At its core is the acceptance of an "unequal, asymmetrical social relation - the split between acting and bearing the impact of action, between the managers and the managed, the knowing and the ignorant, the refined and the crude" (Bauman, 2004, p.65). As such, in addition to creating the subject positions of the cultural participant and non-participant, the discursive constitution of the Arts also established the possibility for these cultural elite to exist.

These elite were individuals who were represented as enjoying a distinctly greater knowledge, understanding and sensibility for the aesthetic experience and thus best placed to manage the development of society's culture. The existence of such cultural elites became even more important as the Arts and the state came together, for the legitimacy of this relationship relied to a great extent upon the spoken testimony of those who were understood as the twentieth century equivalent of Matthew Arnold's 'great men of culture' (2009 [1869]). Men (and they were mostly men) who were represented as being passionately motivated to share the best that had been said and done with those who lived outside of the clique of the cultivated and learned and in so doing to improve their place in life (Hewison, 2013; Sinclair, 1995).

The existence within the discourse of such a subject identity, along with their taken for granted role in decision making, aligned easily with what Gray (2000) has described as democratic elitism: the dominant model of policy making in the UK for much of the twentieth century. This model gains its own discursive legitimacy from two of the core assumptions of the modern episteme, namely the notion that truth can be identified in a disinterested way by those with the right knowledge and that as such, knowledge exists independently of power (Foucault, 1977). And so, from the outset of state subsidies for the Arts, the relationship between the two institutions has been predicated upon the labelling of some individuals as experts who were able to ensure the “‘fair’ disbursement of grants to arts organisations according to observable criteria of judgement, thus being, in principle, accountable to ‘the public’” (McGuigan, 2004, p.39). As Hewison has noted, this belief is enshrined in the principle of arms-length governance that “consigns the management of cultural policy to a group of experts who know transcendence when they see it” (2013, p.57) because they are represented as knowing better than most about how best to maximise opportunities for aesthetic experiences. They are the few who Keynes described as capable of passionate perception (Pinnock, 2006) and that (in the French context) Bourdieu would come to label as cultural intermediaries (1984) whose role was to increase the cultural catchment of the objects and activities most valued by those with most status in society.

Not only are these cultural experts a product of the institutional discourses of the Arts, their dominance of the cultural policy field is sustained because their expertise and right to speak is legitimated by the acknowledgement of their position by other experts to whom they reciprocate their support using the same discursive logic that produces both of them as subjects. They thus “operate in the role of self-advocates rather than self-critics, creating what has been defined as an ‘interminable circuit of inter-legitimation’ (Bourdieu 1984, p. 53)” (Jancovich, 2015b, p.9). It is for this reason that cultural policy remains primarily orientated towards the protection of the Arts to the detriment of some individuals and their ability to participate in a range of activities of their

choosing. Cultural policy at all levels is almost entirely shaped by the decisions of a narrow group of individuals who have been granted status and authority on the basis of the institutional discourses that their decisions and practices reproduce.

While their own affirmation had previously been adequate to validate such decisions and the logics upon which they were based, the adoption by government of the principles of New Public Management (Chappell and Knell, 2012; Moore, 2005; Moore, 1995) engendered a need for more supposedly objective decision making. As such, the cultural policy field saw a deluge of evidence and evidence making¹⁴⁷ as policymakers, practitioners, politicians and academics all sought ways in which to capture, measure, and articulate the impact of state subsidy for the Arts. Indeed the measurement of impact appears to have become a creative industry in its own right with many of these new discursive texts being produced by new agents in what has been described as the rise of calculative cultural expertise (Prince 2013, see also Power, 1997 for similar discussions). However, Prince has argued that these supposedly independent figures and the allegedly objective evidence that they produce simply obscure what ultimately remains the subjective decisions of an elite few behind the performed objectivity that could be provided by statistics and consultants reports¹⁴⁸ providing 'killer facts' (Stevens, 2011) for making persuasive policy stories.

6.1.3 The challenge of a cultural democracy

However the dominant model of managing the relationship between the Arts and the state is persistently challenged by an alternative one that presents it as thoroughly elitist, concerned only with supporting the esoteric interests of the most privileged and those that wished to mimic them. The discourse of democratising culture that has been so central to the justification of state subsidy for the Arts was particularly critiqued on the basis that it ignored all

¹⁴⁷ Reports, literature reviews, project evaluations, public consultations etc. A selection of such material has also been summarized in Chapter 2.

¹⁴⁸ It was at this time (2005) that the *Taking Part* survey was introduced in England.

cultural activity outside of a narrowly defined canon and contained little focus on access to the means of cultural production and distribution (EDUCULT, 2015; Garnham, 2005; Evrard, 1997; DiMaggio and Useem, 1978). The accusation was that in practice, cultural policy focused only on providing access to those activities and objects that had historically been seen as the preserve of the social elite, be that the aristocracy or the ruling bourgeoisie (Stevenson *et al.*, 2015; Landry and Matarasso, 1999). This also raised the question of regressive taxation given that, from the outset of state subsidies for the Arts, the taxation of those on the lowest incomes was supporting activities primarily undertaken by those that could arguably afford to pay more for them.

This was not an argument restricted to the UK, and UNESCO was explicitly calling for governments across the world to understand what the cultural needs of individuals were, rather than presuming they simply wanted access to that which had previously been denied to them:

In working out a cultural policy it is necessary to evaluate needs and to know what exists to meet them. In most countries very little is known concerning either of these aspects: people do not even know what methods can be used to discover the facts of cultural activity and what are the needs of the public (UNESCO, 1969)

Those arguing against the status quo suggested that the majority of what was supposedly being redistributed through state support appeared to be irrelevant to the majority. This is a point made forcefully by Su Braden in her book *Artists and People* (1978) in which she denounced the Arts Council's ideological support for 'bourgeois culture'¹⁴⁹. In the UK, movements focused on community arts and the centres in which it was often created were indicative of the emergence of a new discourse of cultural democracy (EDUCULT, 2015;

¹⁴⁹ This was in line with the position being adopted by UNESCO at the time where there was a call for government policies in this area to acknowledge a diversity of culture by virtue of no longer only promoting wider access to 'high-class culture', but rather to promote creative activity and the expression of individual personality amongst the populace (Toleda Silva, 2015).

Garnham, 2005; Evrard, 1997; DiMaggio and Useem, 1978) that challenged the status quo through suggesting a far broader range of activities should be supported and promoted by the state. Demands for greater support for the local, amateur and popular culture that was produced and arguably preferred by those represented as the ordinary public (Bianchini *et al.* 1988; Mulgan and Warpole, 1986) meant that by the 1970's the canon of state subsidised activities had expanded slightly to include film and jazz (Black, 2006). However the majority of subsidies remained orientated to those organisations whose activities best reflected the original manifestations of the Arts¹⁵⁰ and as such criticism only intensified. By the 1980s Norman Tebbit¹⁵¹ was forcefully arguing that the Arts Council was not only elitist but also politically biased and unable to provide what the people wanted (Dodd, 1995). Increasingly, part of the discursive legitimisation work required by the agents of the Arts was to explain how the system was not simply an elite "defending their own tastes and status in the name of the masses" (Jensen, 2002, p.197 citing Charles Paul Freund).

There are doubtless those who would contend that the Arts are no longer elitist. Indeed many of the interviewees did and as evidence of this, they pointed to the ways in which they sought to break down barriers in order to diversify their audiences. However it was evident that they primarily understood the idea of elitism in social or economic terms and overlooked the extent to which, by its very nature, the Arts must retain a cultural elite if it is to mean anything at all. And so while it may be the case that since the middle of the twentieth century there has been an increasing shift towards participation between the artist, the art, and the audience (Walmsley, 2013b; Brown *et al.*, 2011a; van Wel *et al.*,

¹⁵⁰ In 1969, one third of the Art Council's spending still went on four institutions: The National Theatre, Royal Opera House, Royal Shakespeare Company and Sadler's Wells (Black, 2006). In 1978 this disparity remained given that thirty travelling theatre companies shared less the £1million while the Royal Shakespeare Company and National shared £4million (Itzin 1980, cited in McGuigan 2004).

¹⁵¹ Tebbit called for cultural provision to be met by an effective and unregulated market where people would be free to partake of what they chose, be it pornography on page three or classicism in the gallery (Dodd, 1995). Government was represented as having taken an unnecessary interest in the private lives of its citizens, and in doing so presided over the transference of wealth from those with the least to support the minority interests of those with the most.

2006; McCarthy and Kimberly, 2001), changing the format of the participation with an elite does not in and of itself eradicate that elite. Bishop talks of the extent to which artists have striven to “collapse the distinction between performer and audience, professional and amateur, production and reception” (2006, p. 10) but these distinctions can only be collapsed within the institutional discourses of the Arts. They can never be eradicated because to do so would be to stop affirming the existence of the Arts as a distinct realm of human activity. The relationship between the components might change, the names with which they are labelled may be reimagined, but the components all remain and the imagined outcome remains the same: the Arts, the unique experience that it offers participants, and the need for a cultural elite to mediate the relationship between the two – this is a core part of the institutional discourse that proves impossible for cultural policy to think outside of.

6.1.4 Cultural professionals

Gartman (1991) has argued that critical theory research can too often invoke the existence of elites without being specific about which individuals they are referring to or offering enough detail about how their dominance over culture works. In an attempt to avoid such a shortcoming, it is important to clarify who have been understood as the cultural elite within the present study. Lesley Riddoch identifies the cultural elite as being located within the network of bureaucratic governance¹⁵² through which modern government functions:

... the power wielded by funders, civil servants, and arts administrators over what to show and what to store, what to expose to a Scotland-wide audience, what to confine to ‘experimental spaces’ and what to simply ignore. (2014, p.273)

However Jancovich (2015) understands this elite to be a far broader network, and includes those well-funded organisations that have been understood as wielding the most power and influence in cultural policy making (see also

¹⁵² See, Taylor (1997) for a discussion of network governance in relation to cultural policy in the UK.

Griffiths *et al.*, 2008). It is often argued that within such organisations there emerge a limited number of voices that claim greatest authority (Lukes, 2005). This leads Jancovich (2015b) to suggest that it is the senior representatives of the best funded cultural organisations that have the greatest power, far more than those working within the organisations that fund them. She argues that fundamental change with regards to how cultural policy decisions are made are blocked by these “powerful organisations [and their leaders] that have a strong stake at the table” (2015b, p.10) and seek to use it in order to retain their own status and dominance.

While this researcher agrees that the most senior and prominent individuals from major funded organisations are amongst those with the greatest status in the field, they would not limit the label of the cultural elite to these individuals alone. To do so would focus on what Foucault might understand as sovereign power to the detriment of any consideration of disciplinary power (1977. See, in particular, pp.170-177). Disciplinary power is far less visible because of the extent to which it is de-centralised and manifest in what Foucault describes as the micro-physics of power (1977). Disciplinary power is not a thing that can be acquired, reserved or possessed, rather it is a relation that is constantly operating at the most micro levels of social relations and is exercised both strategically and tactically to maintain advantage in any given field through ensuring control over its discourses and discursive practice. In so doing, such acts of power are responsible for the production and preservation of belief and values (Maguire and Mathews, 2010; Connor, 1992; Bourdieu, 1984; Foucault, 1980). While the state may draft laws and policies that determine who is normal and who is abnormal, “these policies and laws are based on knowledge produced by disciplines and institutions” (Danaher *et al.*, 2000) and thus affirm the truth of these disciplines and the inequalities inherent in their institutions. Those who claim to have most knowledge about the field that the institution dominates then sustain such truths through their ubiquity of use and unchallenged repetition.

And so this thesis argues that the cultural elite includes all those agents whose representation within the field as some type of cultural professional marks them out as legitimate to make statements about what is of cultural value, and in doing so make or affirm choices about how to spend public money on supporting cultural participation – a kind of aesthetic technocrat. This therefore includes artists, critics, cultural commentators, academics, policy-makers, and the staff of cultural organisations¹⁵³. Indeed it would include all of those whose cultural preferences are afforded greater privilege by the state, who can employ power more easily within the field of cultural policy, and who can use this to benefit their own status both within the field and beyond. While there may be disagreements about which particular type of cultural professional should be able to employ the greatest power¹⁵⁴, they all share a commitment to the discursive logic that allows their subjective judgments to gain the status of objective truths based on their “ability to distinguish and valorise different cultural experiences in a way that resonates with others claiming the same expertise” (Prince, 2013, p.747). The more status an individual gains within the field, the more power they can employ to affirm their own status and the status of others but the more vigorously they must also defend the discursive logic upon which their status relies.

From this perspective all of those interviewed for this study can be understood as part of this network of cultural professionals whose access to this subject identity within the field grants them a more elevated status than they would have by virtue of simply participating with the Arts. It is the same distinction that Clive Bell endorsed when he distinguished between the ‘civilisers’ and the ‘simply civilised’ (1928), or between those who can have Taste and those who can legitimately seek to shape Taste (Nixon & du Gay, 2002). Through their statements and their actions these civilisers assert their identity as cultural

¹⁵³ This perspective places this thesis at odds with Adorno (1978b) who drew a distinction between those that he understood as administrators and those who had expertise in art.

¹⁵⁴ This is because institutions are not without internal friction - they contain multiple self-serving interest groups who seek to gain access, influence and control over the resources and power that the institution can employ within a given field. For an example such a dispute see Stevenson (2014) for an analysis of a discursive event centered on the governance of Creative Scotland.

professionals who should be seen to be legitimately able to talk knowingly about the cultural participation of others. Interviewees access to the identity of cultural professional was regularly evident throughout the interviews as they altered their discursive position (Wodak, 2007) from one in which their opinion was being sought "*as a person*" to one in which it was being sought as "*a professional*" (a distinction that Interviewees 4, 5, 6, 14, 16 and 17 all explicitly made). Such movement between discursive positions is not unusual, for as Foucault notes, any position:

can be filled by virtually any individual when he formulates the statement; and in so far as one and the same individual may occupy, in turn, the same series of statements, different positions, and assume the role of different subjects (1972, p.94).

And so the more explicit the questions became about cultural participation policies, the more the interviewees adopted an explicitly professional identity and the related discursive position. This distinction was evident, for example, in Interviewee 5 speaking of putting on their "*professional hat*" before answering certain questions, Interviewee 17 clarifying if they were being asked as an individual or as a representative of their organisation, and Interviewee 11 stating that this was them "*speaking as a human being, not an employee*".

6.1.5 Claiming expertise, not elitism

An awareness of the elevated status that this professional identity granted them was evident in many of the interviewees' responses; however care was also taken with regards to how this was represented. On one hand it was common for interviewees to explicitly distance themselves and their institutions from any accusations of elitism:

*I think the more, **I am not trying to sound elitist**, the more an audience knows or can be receptive to things the more I think the institutions should reach out to them and provide them with what they want.* (Interviewee 17)

*I think if you don't reach out and engage more widely, **it just becomes very elitist** and your audience are all ... all... middle class people who are already engaged in culture (Interviewee 12)*

***There is also an elitism**, let's be completely honest, **there is an elitism**, ballet, opera, less so theatre but still to a certain extent [...] there is a thing of it not being... **of it being elite** (interviewee 41)*

*...that is where you get into questions of who defines quality and **accusations of elitism** and all of that. (Interviewee 25)*

Such a rejection is to be expected given the threat that the idea of elitism poses to the institutional relationship between the Arts and the state, which has been discussed previously in this thesis. However interviewees simultaneously all appeared to draw a line with regards to how far their stated desire for participation with the public would go and in so doing affirmed the necessity of some kind of elite decision maker of which their own role was one particular example. There was a point at which the opinions of the cultural non-participant (and indeed cultural participant) were no longer seen to be legitimate or wanted, in particular with regards to any decisions about the nature of what it was that state subsidies to support cultural participation would provide. As interviewee 17 said *"it is a question of them not really knowing what they want, or not knowing much about the field [...] **we have to take the leading role in that exchange**"*. Through employing the discursive identity of the non-participant that has been outlined in Chapter 5, Interviewees were able justify this relationship on the basis that the non-participant lacked some degree of knowledge that made their input inappropriate at certain points:

*...would you ask your plumber to do an operation on your brain, you wouldn't really, and yet we constantly think that audiences can tell us what to do [...] but there is a point at which the audience can't do it, because **they don't have the knowledge**, they are not **in the daily infrastructure** of it and the kind of...**knowing the industry** [...] you just have to trust the neurosurgeon! (Interviewee 21)*

*...you know the program here is run by me, and is it just my taste, do I get to decide how £666,000 of public money is spent every year just down to my personal taste? And we defend that quite a lot by saying, no, no, because obviously, it is a question of **somebody that is trained**, and **somebody who ... is fully engaged** (Interviewee 4)*

*...in terms of participation, it is still **led by people who have expertise**, you know they say you can curate a show from the Tate collection, what art work do you want, this one or this one, you know, it is still, there absolutely is **a role for expertise**... (Interviewee 12)*

*[Despite previously stating that "It's not about people coming to us and us giving them expertise"] I am all for and I fully believe in cultural engagement within communities, but there is also that thing, when I am directing or facilitating, **that is my job, my training, I have to be the expert** because I am letting people down if I am not [... ...] It is like if I saw someone who was distressed, I would not go and deal with that on my own, I would speak to a professional. [...] It is kind of like, you know, **we do know what we are doing**, that's not to take anything away from you. (Interviewee 41)*

*...of course we are providing them with **what they should want**, because, because we flatter ourselves that **we know** what we are curating, and that **we appreciate and know some of the complexities of it** so we are trying to, in the nicest possible way, educate people about that... (Interviewee 17)*

The discomfort evident in some of the interviewees as they rejected any suggestion of elitism while simultaneously affirming their own elite status is not unusual, for in their desire to gain access to status within the field of cultural policy even those individuals who may hold dissonant perspectives and employ conflicting discourses from alternative discursive positions are required to suppress or adapt them. They must do so in order to legitimately employ the subject identity of the cultural professional and in order to defend that ability once they have attained it. This is necessary because in gaining access at any level to any dominant faction within a discursive field all fundamentally different understandings of reality must be "repressed and forgotten so that the dominant group can continue to justify the 'inevitability' of their own rise to power" (Danaher *et al.*, 2000, p.24). While individuals might adopt different

logics when speaking from outside of the field, when speaking from their position within it they must repeatedly ensure they affirm the discourses upon which their status relies (Danaher *et al.*, 2000, p.26) and is indicative of the extent to which, for any individual, their life is “made easier through capitulation to the collective[s] with which they identify” (Adorno, 1978, p.202). As such, truth becomes what is good for us to believe in any given circumstance (James, 1995 [1907]).

This is why, whenever the interview moved from a discussion about culture in the abstract to a specific discussion about cultural participation policies, the interviewees would adopt a professional identity, employ the discourse of inadequate participation, and affirm the existence of a cultural non-participant, even if they had dismissed cultural non-participation as impossible elsewhere in the interview. As Interviewee 14 stated, while they personally would never make the assumption that anyone was a cultural non-participant, they knew that it was common in their profession to do just that. This was a sentiment that was shared by Interviewee 41 who felt that *“there is that assumption that we make, quite often that we make, that certain groups haven’t got a cultural life”*. The ‘we’ in this sentence is presumably those with whom they share their professional identity, individuals that Interviewee 21 described as:

*...the **people who run the arts that love the arts** [...who] are therefore completely committed to it, and for whom it is therefore a lifelong ambition and mission to bring everybody into it* (Interviewee 21).

Institutions such as the Arts are established through the actualisation of value judgements and “they are always likely to become fixated by the desire to conserve and reproduce those values” (Connor, 1992, p.4). For as Adorno (1978b) notes, the external affectivity of an institution is a function of its inner homogeneity, and while there may well be competition within the institution for access to greater status and an increased share of resources (Taylor & Van Every, 1993), such competition is restrained by a transcendent interest in

maintaining the integrity of the whole. So while there may be those agents within the institution that would like to instigate change, they face significant discursive sanctions should they attempt to do so in a manner that puts the institution at risk.

As such, to be committed to the Arts demands a commitment to its discourses and the values and beliefs that they reproduce. For those who gain societal status from a discursive identity constructed from the discourses of the Arts cannot deny the existence of the cultural non-participant when talking from their professional position within the field of cultural policy. To do so would be to risk undermining the discursive credibility of the institution of which they are a part. This is not an option as it is the acceptance of these discursive logics that give meaning to the texts that cultural professionals produce (funding applications, evaluation reports etc.), the practices they employ (outreach activities, free access, discounted tickets etc.) and ultimately upon which the continued relationship between the Arts and the state relies. Cultural professionals cannot claim legitimate expertise unless they have a structure of meaning upon which to base such claims and the resultant status that they gain. The necessity to maintain the discourses upon which this structure of meaning relies results in a discursive path dependency¹⁵⁵ that means what can be thought and said, and by whom, remains fundamentally constrained within the field of cultural policy. This limits the extent to which anyone with any influence in the field can change it, even if they wanted to, because cultural professionals must always affirm the distinction between “those who do the valuing and those whose actions are subjected to evaluation” (Connor, 1992, p.248).

6.1.6 The logics of decision making

In 1945 Keynes made clear that with the establishment of the Arts Council, there was no intention to “socialise this side of social endeavour” (1945, p.21) and so it appears to remain the case today. For while there may be tension

¹⁵⁵ This is not discursive path dependence as understood in linguistics whereby in discussion between agents over multiple connected propositions, the orders in which claims are made are seen to affect the conclusion reached.

between them, and one might debate their relative influence, it remains the case that cultural policy decisions are made between a network of cultural professionals consisting of artists, arts managers, bureaucrats, academics, critics, and politicians. Participation by the full spectrum of the public in decisions regarding the production and supply of subsidised culture is not desired (Jancovich, 2015b; Fennell *et al.*, 2009) or even understood as sensible. As the self-proclaimed representatives of the ‘artistic community’ in Scotland stated during the 2013 *stooshie*¹⁵⁶ (see Stevenson, 2014 for a discussion of this discursive event), they believed that “*existing resources are best managed in an atmosphere of trust between **those who make art and those who fund it***” (Greig *et. al.* 2012 emphasis added). In their response to this demand, despite reaffirming their commitment to “*increasing public engagement and participation*” (Creative Scotland, 2012c), Creative Scotland’s board appears to agree with this assumption. Although committing to the establishment of forums that will feed into any future policy development, the wider public were only incidentally informed of them. As such, these forums were essentially limited to “*artists, creative practitioners and staff*” (Creative Scotland, 2012d) and did not include representatives of all the interest groups that state subsidies for culture are presumably intended to support.

The degree to which, within the field of cultural policy, members of the public are constructed as passive objects rather than as active subjects was evidenced in the current data when interviewees were directly asked who else should be spoken to about the subject of cultural non-participation. Interviewee’s suggestions included funders, administrators, academics, artists, managers, and civil servants but never the public and never the non-participant, whom this study is ostensibly about. In practice, the discursive passivity of the public is manifest in the extent to which it is apparently unproblematic for them to be wholly excluded from Creative Scotland’s decision-making process. In offering a summary of how they decided upon those organisations that would share £300

¹⁵⁶ A Scottish term broadly meaning uproar, commotion or row, often used in relation to some form of protest.

million pounds of public money over three years by becoming regularly funded organisations, Creative Scotland extensively stress the presence of art-form expertise, while those that are meant to participate with what is funded are noticeable by their absence:

*In stage one; all applications were assessed individually against published criteria **by staff with the appropriate art-form or specialism knowledge, by finance staff and in detail by art-form teams.** In stage two; those applications recommended from stage one were then discussed in detail by the **senior team at Creative Scotland, including art-form leads,** with the aim of building as balanced a portfolio as possible for Regularly Funded Organisations across different art-forms, geography, organisational scale, range and diversity. The recommended portfolio was then presented to the **Creative Scotland Board** for final approval on 16 October. Each application was considered by 30 different people across the decision making process. They included our **Specialist Officers, Finance Team, Directors, Art form Portfolio Managers and Board.** (Creative Scotland, 2015h)*

However for all that those representing themselves during the *stooshie* as the spokespeople for the ‘artistic community’ (and thus culture) rejected the purportedly “*obfuscating language of management*” (Greig *et.al.*, 2012), the same might equally be said about the esoteric and opaque nature of the language of “*art form expertise*” that was represented as the legitimate manner in which to discuss and defend spending decisions on cultural subsidies¹⁵⁷. Because irrespective of which language is employed, they all seek to manage the practice of individuals and serve to deny the public the ability to speak (Davis, 2010) within the field of cultural policy.

Pinnock (2006) describes such decision making logic as Keynesian, and points out that it has remained the dominant approach to cultural policy at the same time as it has increasingly been abandoned in other areas of government. The apparent extent to which a network of cultural professionals have maintained their dominance of cultural policy is especially surprising given the political

¹⁵⁷ It is a position that this particular group share with John Tusa (2007) and Brian McMaster (2008) who are particularly vocal advocates for the need for a special type of expertise in making cultural policy decisions.

economy of advanced liberalism, the discourses of which represent the public as autonomous, rational agents who will respond to external stimuli and incentives in a self-maximising manner. It was these discourses that supported the development of New Public Management into New Public Governance.

New Public Governance draws even more extensively on Mark Moore's theory of Public Value (1995) in which legitimacy and democratic authorisation arises from the delivery of policy objectives developed collaboratively with individuals in their role as citizens. For Moore, it is fundamental that any publicly funded organisation has a clear understanding of what its *raison d'être* is in the eyes of citizens, and only by measuring success against these refined public preferences can they gain the approval of what Moore describes as the "external authorising environment" (1995, p.34)¹⁵⁸. This shift resulted in all areas of government in the UK¹⁵⁹ adopting a stated enthusiasm for encouraging and evidencing the participation of 'ordinary people' in all areas of public life (Clarke, 2013). 'Ordinary people' had become the mythical figure that must be obeyed and satisfied, supposedly at all costs (McGuigan, 2004). This enthusiasm manifested itself across the public sector in the form of increased public consultations (Bunting, 2007), the measurement of public satisfaction (Lee *et al.*, 2011) and a challenge for state supported organisations to reflect and reform the way in which they engage with the interests of the public (Keaney, 2006)¹⁶⁰. Cultural policy was no exception and Chris Smith, the UK Culture Secretary at the time, spearheaded a new wave of audience-led initiatives intended to bring "democracy to culture [...] through a process generated from the bottom rather than the top" (1998, p.17).

However institutions whose relationship with the state has thus far been predicated on the knowledge and authority of professional expertise face a

¹⁵⁸ For a discussion about public value in relation to cultural policy see Lee *et al.*, 2011 and Gray, 2008.

¹⁵⁹ First promoted through the Number 10 strategy unit and their publication *Creating Public Value* (Kelly *et al.*, 2002).

¹⁶⁰ The BBC became the most high profile public organisation to embrace the idea of public value, conducting their own public value study in advance of their charter review in 2007 (Coyle and Woollard, 2009; Collins, 2007)

significant difficulty when they are made to ask rather than tell the public what value their institution has and how the public should respond as a result of this supposed value. It is a difficulty that is summarised effectively by Clarke:

...the process of discovering, summoning and enrolling ordinary people is a difficult process. It demands considerable political and governmental labour and its results are unpredictable. These subjects do not necessarily come when summoned, nor do they necessarily behave according to the plan if they do arrive. (2013, p.222)

Or, to paraphrase, what if the public don't share the values and beliefs of the institution, have different priorities and demand significant change to what is currently supported? What if they simply don't feel that they need that institution in their life and do not want to participate with it? What if they simply do not value what it is that is being subsidised and express that through the choices that they make? For as Pinnock argues, "the value that people attach to art can reasonably be inferred from the use(s) they are seen to make of it" (Pinnock, 2006, p.175).

The answer, in part, is to problematise their values through offering an explanation of why they do not align with those of the institution and in so doing retain control over the dominant understanding of the institution. And so for the cultural professional it is not good enough to only manage meanings about the cultural content of any particular object or action (as De Propriis and Mwaura, 2013 suggest), or even to simply affirm the possibility of non-participation. To maintain control of the field, cultural professionals must also manage the way in which the non-participant subject is understood, in the manner that has been shown in Chapter 5. Because expertise and the additional status one may claim because of it is not an innate individual trait but is constituted between a network of human and non-human agents, "an individual's expert status depends on their position in assemblages of human and nonhuman materials and technologies" (Prince, 2013, p.750). The

maintenance of these assemblages therefore becomes paramount to the expert and a task to which power will necessarily be applied.

And so where public consultations have been employed they remain the result of top-down directives (Peck, 2009; Hay, 2007) resulting in superficial attempts to ask the public what they thought the Arts can do for them¹⁶¹, facilitated by cultural professionals who are best served by the maintenance of the status quo. These are interactions that are far closer to Arnstein's concept of 'inform and consult' on her 'Ladder of Citizen Participation' (1969) than the type of collaborations that she associated with a fully participatory democratic process in which all parties would play an active part.

6.1.7 Co-opting their voice

So, just as McConnell (2009) found in her study¹⁶², cultural policy is made by those that claim the ability to speak on behalf of culture. This ability is granted to them by their subject identity within the institutional discourses of the Arts. It is however important that cultural professionals are seen to be attempting to involve others in their decision making, for although the public has no speech within the field of cultural policy, it does have a voice, a voice that is controlled by the cultural professionals who are able to co-opt it to their service (see Davis, 2010 and Hallward, 2005 for a discussion of how some groups can co-opt the voices of others). For example, in explaining why the government takes an interest in cultural participation, Interviewee 19 employed the voice of the interviewer as a representative of a broader society with homogenized desires:

*part of **our** lives as society, is to encourage cultural participation [...] just as **you want** efficient health services and **you want** to know they are being run efficiently, and that's a reasonable request, **you know, you also want to know** that cultural provision is being run efficiently but **you're doing** it for another reason, **you're doing** it because **you believe** it's a fundamental part of a civilised society*

¹⁶¹ ACE's Arts Debate is a prime example of this, as outlined previously.

¹⁶² It should be noted that McConnell did not see this as a necessarily bad thing but associated it with a subject identity that she describes as 'the cultural hero' who is a passionate advocate and defendant of the arts.

Here, the voice of a silent public is invoked to justify the subjective decisions of the network of professionals that maintains the most significant influence over cultural policy. As one of the interviewees with an influence over what received funding stated: (note the pronouns)

[When asked about funds supporting activities for which there appeared to be small audiences]...*we are still happy to fund things where **we think** there is good work, so for me that suggests we see it as market failure, the analogy would be funding a bus link in Wester Ross because nobody in the market would supply that product. But if **we think** there is a need for people to see, **we think** there is a need for experimental film to be pushed forward as a medium continually then we would continue to fund that. So there are certainly some **decisions taken as an organisation around what is of value to Scotland***

As the final sentence makes clear, it is unproblematic to suggest that cultural professionals have a legitimate right to decide which activities are discursively understood as having the greatest value to all the people of Scotland and which are presumably seen as mere pleasures of contentment and distraction¹⁶³. This is indicative of the extent to which management (in the sense of controlling and manipulating the probability and understanding of social actions) is embedded within the discursive practice of the cultural professional. Not only in terms of making statements about what is of value, but also in regards whose value statements are seen as legitimate and in which circumstances. For managing is to restrict the freedom of the managed through limiting their capacity to be heard, and thus their ability to challenge the status quo. This is one of the core principles of Rancière's broad ranging critique of society and democracy in which his most basic assumption is very simple: "everyone thinks, everyone speaks [and yet] the prevailing division of labour and configuration of society ensures that only certain classes of people are authorized to think" (2005, p.26) and thus capable of speech. Labeling some individuals with the subject identity of a cultural non-participant allows the cultural professionals to do just this and

¹⁶³ Likewise, for all that Creative Scotland's Open Call for funding requires all applicants whose funded activities will not involve the public "to describe how [their] project will enable [them] to engage with people in the future"(2015b), the public have no opportunity to judge the value they will supposedly gain, that is agreed between the applicant and the assessor.

to keep control of the field upon which their status relies.

As such, it is the assertion of this thesis that the discursive problem of non-participation also functions as an articulatory practice (Laclau and Mouffe, 1985, p.96) that constitutes and organizes social relations. Not only in the sense that it constructs the subject identity of the non-participant and in doing so “produce the phenomena that it regulates and constrains” (Butler, 1993, p.2) but also in that it represent the subjective choices of cultural professionals as part of the solution rather than part of the discursive structures that make the existence of a non-participant both possible and plausible. Although the outputs of these decisions will inevitably support the cultural participation of some, that is a secondary outcome of decisions that are taken first and foremost to support the existing manifestations of the Arts and the interests of the cultural professionals who run, value and make use of them.

6.2 The effect of asymmetric power relationships within the field

Creative Scotland (2014a) found that when asked, most people felt supporting cultural participation was something public money should be spent on. While this was echoed in ACE’s 2006 *Arts Debate* it also indicated that “the real issue is not whether or why – it is how” (Bunting, 2007, p.20). In this study, the majority of those that did not represent themselves as part of the artistic community were concerned that decisions were made by “a small, closed group of experts who are not in touch with the needs and priorities of the wider population” (2007, p.23). In contrast, the majority of artists and those working in arts organisations felt that wider involvement of the public would lead to safe decisions and the ‘dumbing down’ of subsidised art (see also Jancovich, 2015 for a discussion of this fear). In turn, the extent to which only certain subjects are seen as legitimately able to speak within the field of cultural policy has an effect on how the practice of supporting cultural participation is understood and evaluated as successful. The next section of this chapter considers such effects in more detail.

6.2.1 The calcification of public subsidy

As Pinnock (2006) points out, the logic of evidence-based policy making would suggest that the process of public subsidy for the arts should proceed as follows:

Make subsidised art available, publicise its availability, and see who responds. If not enough people respond or if most of those who do could afford the art without the subsidy, then fund something different (Pinnock, 2006, p.178)

Yet in practice this is not what occurs. Public subsidy continues to support that which the majority have little interest in and which the majority of participants with could arguably afford to pay for themselves. Despite decades of work to improve access and increase participation, as the recent Warwick Commission (2015) has highlighted, it is the wealthiest, better educated and least ethnically diverse 8% of the UK population¹⁶⁴ that makes most use of publically subsidised organisations and events (and thus enjoy a significantly higher public spend per head on their cultural interests). Taking into account the extent to which Lottery Funding is being employed to mitigate reductions to grant-in-aid, this wealth transference is arguably becoming even worse. Considering National Lottery Expenditure in England, Stark, *et. al.* found that:

The Arts Lottery has disproportionately benefited the most prosperous and ‘arts engaged’ communities in England, which are often also those contributing least to the Lottery. Some of the least arts-engaged and poorest communities, meanwhile, who are contributing most heavily to the ‘arts good cause’, receive the least return (2014, Executive Summary)¹⁶⁵

Fiona Hyslop suggested that in terms of cultural policy in Scotland “**How** we do things is just as important as what things we do” (2013, emphasis added). This research would not disagree, for the manner in which decisions are made and

¹⁶⁴ And this figure represented an improvement on that which had been recorded historically.

¹⁶⁵ While these studies did not look at Scotland, given the degree to which the majority of state subsidy supports a network of cultural organisations not dissimilar to those in England, it can be assumed that a similar situation exists there also.

the resultant calcification of that which is subsidised speaks volumes in this regard. For all that McConnell (2009) suggested cultural policymaking was an unexpected and non-linear process, such an unpredictable process appears to consistently deliver startlingly similar outputs.

For example, despite Creative Scotland's 2014 overhaul of its funding streams, resulting in an expanded group of organisations receiving 3 year funding, 83% of them had been those organisations that had always received some form of regular funding. Of the 20 supposedly new organisations, they bore a startling resemblance to the type of organisations already receiving support and many had received some sort of project funding previously (see Creative Scotland, 2015i for a list of those receiving subsidy and on which these claims are made). Eleven of Scotland's 32 councils have no regular funded organisation located in them¹⁶⁶; this is equivalent to a quarter of the population having no regular investment of central government subsidy to support cultural participation in their local area. One can only imagine that if Edinburgh had no subsidy there would be an outcry, and yet the population of Edinburgh is only one third of this number. However Interviewee 19 was not alone in seeing this type of inequality as unproblematic, stating that: "*if I was living in the Highlands¹⁶⁷, I would know living in the Highlands that I wasn't going to get access to large scale whatever, that's a choice, that's a personal choice*". This is further evidence that any question of equal access is equal access to that which the network of cultural professionals choose to fund and support, not equal access to cultural subsidy irrespective of where one lives. In practice, this means that cultural policy tends towards what might best be understood as cultural protectionism, because as Craik has noted in relation to cultural policy in Australia but that might be equally applied to the UK:

In addition to the four models described above¹⁶⁸, we should add the

¹⁶⁶ Clackmannanshire, East Ayrshire, East Renfrewshire, Falkirk, Midlothian, Moray, North Ayrshire, Renfrewshire, Scottish Borders Council, South Lanarkshire and West Dunbartonshire.

¹⁶⁷ As it happens the Highlands does have some regularly funded organisations.

¹⁶⁸ *The patron model*; the *architect model*; the *engineer model*; and the *facilitator model* (Craik, 2007, p.1).

elite nurturer model (Craik 1996). In this model, governments select a small number of elite cultural organisations to receive a one-line budget and/or other generous subsidies, thus placing them in a coveted position by guaranteeing recurrent funding that insulates them from having to compete with 'outsider' cultural organisations. (2007, p.2)

The results of such protectionism and the resultant cultural disenfranchisement (Holden, 2010) enacted by this network of cultural professionals and their interminable circuit of inter-legitimation (Bourdieu 1984) has been well documented over the past fifty years (Stark *et al.*, 2013; Jancovich, 2011). In 2004 85% of Arts Council England's funding was going to the same organisations it had the decade before (Frayling, 2005). In 2008, despite promising a change in patterns of funding, 67% of those previously receiving funding from Arts Council England received an increase while other smaller organisations were having to close through lack of support (Jancovich, 2015b). The ROCC report (Stark *et al.*, 2013) highlighted the continued dominance of major London organisations in securing support from ACE, while in Scotland almost 70% of those receiving regular funding are based in Glasgow or Edinburgh¹⁶⁹.

Despite the regularity with which this inequity is highlighted, little of any significance is ever done about it. The 65% of Scotland's central government spend on culture that is consumed by the Scottish National Collections and National Performing Companies has, to all intents and purposes, been taken out of the equation by being granted a direct funding relationship with the Scottish Government. It is highly unlikely that come 2018, Creative Scotland will hand out their next round of funding to a portfolio of organisations vastly different from that which exists today, especially given the increasingly insistent demands for stability and security from those organisations receiving subsidy, which make moving funding elsewhere highly difficult. In turn, as these privileged organisations, their staff and the network of preferred artists whose

¹⁶⁹ Creative Scotland stresses that many of these organisations take their work out into other regions of Scotland.

work they support, consume the majority of the cultural budget, “there is little opportunity to fund new or experimental cultural forms, thus risking conservatism, or stasis, of cultural development” (Craik, 2007, p.2). As one of the participants in Jancovich’s study noted, the “lack of diversity of perspectives within arts policy ‘tends to produce organisations that have certain sorts of people in certain sorts of roles, which can be ... stultifying” (2015, p.7).

As this researcher has highlighted elsewhere, in 2014 the annual budget for Creative Scotland’s Artist’s Bursaries program, where artists could determine their own projects, was £1.45m, while The National Events budget, where artists got to ‘commemorate’ or ‘celebrate’ other’s projects through partnering with national or regularly funded organisations, was £8m (Stevenson 2014 citing Johnny Gailey). Likewise, amateur and community cultural participation has been recognised as being woefully under resourced (Dodd *et al.*, 2008) despite the amount of people that are involved in it. Voluntary Arts Scotland (a body working across Scotland to support amateur activity) received £100,000 a year subsidy, almost a third of that received by the Collective Gallery - a contemporary Art gallery located at the top of a relatively inaccessible hill in the centre of the capital (Creative Scotland, 2015i). This gallery then sought further public funding in order to support outreach and engagement activities¹⁷⁰ to help diversify their audience – possibly seeking to attract the very individuals that Voluntary Arts Scotland may be struggling to help, given the relatively small size of their own subsidy. Perhaps most telling of all, in 2011 Creative Scotland dedicated only 2.3 million pounds or 3% of their total income to specific “*access and audience development work*” (CS, 2011), work that inherently has a greater flexibility to be more responsive to the interests of those not participating with the type of opportunities provided by the sort of organisations detailed above.

¹⁷⁰ For example, the Collective Gallery received a grant as part of the 2014 Commonwealth Games cultural fund to undertake a project entitled ‘All-Sided Games’. Private discussion with one of the artists involved indicated that one of the events as part of this (a race with 100 people on the top of Calton Hill) failed to attract 100 people. Collective is also being supported with around £600,000 of local authority money and £900,000 of Lottery Funding to support the redevelopment of the site that it occupies in order to make it a more attractive destination.

The relatively inconsequential nature of this amount was acknowledged by an interviewee who worked within Creative Scotland and who described this particular fund as “*peanuts*” and unable to impact wider cultural participation. Indeed from 2015 onwards there was no longer even a dedicated fund for this type of activity. Anyone proposing work specifically intended to “*develop and reach new audiences (including those hard to reach) and encourage more people to get involved in artistic and creative activity*” (Creative Scotland, 2015e) was required to apply for general “*Open Project*” funding and to compete against all those seeking subsidy for work that was not specifically intended to be of interest to those currently uninterested in what the state typically supports financially. With the vast bulk of Scotland’s cultural spend already accounted for, the majority of activity to deliver increased cultural participation is therefore limited to a product-led approach (Kawashima, 2006) that seeks to find ways to increase the interaction between those labelled as non-participants and a limited selection of activities and organisations. The form of which those whose cultural participation is supposedly being supported have little to no significant influence over.

6.2.2 Performative participation policies

All of the above leads to an assertion that despite the stated aim of the Scottish Government to increase cultural participation, cultural participation policies are simply a performative practice that legitimises the continued privilege enjoyed by an existing network of organisations and the network of cultural professionals that both support and benefit from them. Certainly the majority of interviewees were not even aware that increasing cultural participation in Scotland was a policy objective of the Scottish Government, just that their funding agreements required them to be as inclusive as possible and that on occasion they had been asked to target specific groups of people¹⁷¹. In this regard it is worth remembering that the SHS was not specifically designed to monitor the Scottish Government’s National Indicator on Cultural Engagement.

¹⁷¹ Although interviewees stated that this was increasingly less after the establishment of Creative Scotland.

Questions on cultural participation already existed in the SHS before the indicator was established and they were adopted because of the “*amount of boxes*” that the survey was seen to tick and because it was a “*regular and robust piece of research*” (Interviewee 11, 30). As Interviewee 25 stated, “*In terms of the national indicator, I do think it is in there because it is something that can be measured and because the Scottish Government already owned the Scottish Household survey*”. Interviewee 5 simply summed it up as a crude tool that was the outcome of “*successful lobbying*” and remembered the lack of clarity that surrounded its establishment:

...[talking of a consultation meeting about the establishment of an indicator on cultural engagement] *...there was an interesting group of people in the room at the time, you know [staff from Glasgow Life] were there, I was there, [staff from Creative Scotland] were there, there were people from Museums Galleries Scotland, and people from the government...and nobody had an answer to that question, **there is a measurement to indicate how we are doing, but not why we are doing it and whether that is OK or not.*** (Interviewee 5)

However interviewees didn’t feel that the measurement’s crudeness and lack of clarity mattered, because what they felt was most significant was that there was a measure at all. As interviewee 11 said “*from a professional perspective I think that is incredibly significant that it is there*” while Interviewee 38 felt that the existence of the national indicator “*means the Arts is high up the agenda which is fantastic*”. This perspective was one that others concurred with once the nature of the indicator was outlined to them (in particular see interviewees 11, 7, 14, 23 and 39). This is indicative of the extent to which cultural professionals see the existence of the SHS questions and the creation of the national indicator on cultural engagement more in terms of a symbolic acknowledgement of the value of the Arts to the state rather than a genuine desire to gain knowledge about how best to support cultural participation for everyone. It appeared to be of little to no concern as to what useful information it could offer policymakers about patterns of participation, how such patterns might suggest what support should be implemented, or that the data that was available appeared to suggest

current approaches to increasing cultural participation were making no significant change. It is also worth noting that while some interviewees acknowledged that activities to encourage participation were something they needed to do, they were not convinced that those asking them to do it were all that clear about what form that should take or why:

...we are beginning to realize that the people in Creative Scotland know less than we do, and...like I say...I was about to say don't quote me on this but maybe you should, maybe you should, we all need to talk about this. I worry that it [participation activities] is just something that we do...that it is a general...a knee jerk throw money at it because it sounds good. (Interviewee 4)

As one respondent stated when asked about what the expectations were on her organisation with regards to increasing cultural participation: *"the answer is nothing [laughs] what we are expected to do is pretty much what you have mentioned earlier, to use culture as a tool to reach other objectives"* (Interviewee 13). Likewise, Interviewee 41 said that they didn't see themselves as attempting, or even really able, to increase participation with culture. All they felt they could do was to engage people with their theatre and its work. Indeed those that worked in larger organisations receiving regular funding from either Creative Scotland or the Scottish Government generally felt that they were not working to address specific government targets on cultural participation - *"I am not necessarily looking to do things that are aiming to fulfill that strategy, you know"* (Interviewee 14); *If it happens to hit an outcome, which inherently it does, then awesome* (Interviewee 41). Indeed Interviewee 21 spoke of how they made the art and it was the job of the CEO and Marketing Director to talk about that work in the manner that their funders required. Or as Interviewee 13 stated: *"we are not responding to policy, we are responding to art"*.

6.2.3 The discursive practice of 'reaching out'

The fact that existing participation policies appear to have little impact on the national indicator is unsurprising given that, as discussed in Chapter 5, none of the interviewees expressed any sense that they had to specifically work with

individuals who would classify as non-participants within the SHS. Instead, what the majority appeared to understand was that there was an expectation on them as an organisation receiving public subsidy to be seen to undertake some sort of work targeted at any sort of individuals outside of their primary audience demographic, what Interviewee 16 described as “*the vague term audience engagement*” and the majority described as “*reaching out*”:

*...you try and ensure that you are **reaching out** all the time...* (Interviewee 19)

*...well I am sure we will come to this, the need to **reach out** more...* (Interviewee 17)

*...we are doing as best we can with the resources that we have got **to reach out to as many people as we can**...* (Interviewee 16)

*...I would just like to be able to **reach out** and get them in...* (Interviewee 12)

*That's what we do, it's for arts organisation to be aware of who those key people are in those communities to try and **reach out** to those people that are just entirely disengaged [with society]* (Interviewee 38)

In the past, the drive to ‘reach out’ led to situations such as that described by Interviewee 3 where they found themselves conducting outreach activities with people that told them “*we’re not fucking interested in what you do, we want to go and eat popcorn and watch Spiderman, that’s exactly what we need, that’s our culture*”. However the perception amongst the majority of interviewees was that for the most part the ultimate decision about whom they would reach out to remained with the organisation and in most cases a small number of people within that organisation¹⁷²:

¹⁷² This aligns with the idea of street level bureaucrats, as proposed by Lipsky (2010 [1980]). See McCall (2009) for an application of this theory in relation to regional museums in Scotland.

*...obviously we are funded by Creative Scotland so it is important that we have a program, but **what we do with it is actually up to me and my colleague.*** (Interviewee 12)

*...older people is a big thing just now. It is a huge area which I, to be quite honest, **I don't have much personal interest or passion** or expertise in setting up a project for at the moment [... ...] I focus on young people and specifically teenagers **because that is my comfort zone and expertise.*** (Interviewee 12)

*But in a way **the choices of what goes on** [in relation to participation projects] in this building probably **come down to me.*** (Interviewee 7)

*We don't engage with that because **I am not particularly interested in that** [...] Who decides? [who to reach out to] it is ultimately **down to me.*** (Interviewee 38)

*...we always want to work with young men and that is not a Government imposed priority, **that is a priority we put on ourselves.*** (Interviewee 2)

As a metaphor, 'reaching out' aligns with the discursive keyword of barriers that was discussed in Chapters 2 and 3. It represents the organisations as making a special and concerted effort to communicate with someone in circumstances that make that communication more difficult and thus more notable, with the related implication that this contact will be of some sort of benefit to those that are reached. However whether the non-participant chooses to then participate appears of less importance than those receiving subsidy being able to say that they were reaching out and being able to point to actions that evidenced this, even if that action made no permanent difference to the cultural participation patterns of the individuals they reached out to. The existence of the specific practice, not that the subsidised organisations were successfully serving the needs of a full diversity of people, appeared to be what interviewees believed was required. As Interviewee 12 stated: "*I mean obviously we are funded by Creative Scotland, so **it is important that we have an outreach program***", not that the program makes any noticeable difference to the national patterns of

cultural participation. Or as Interviewee 13 stated, *"We are not given any percentages that we need to hit in order to get our funding."*

As such, 'reaching out' is best understood as a performative discursive practice that is central to the representation of subsidised Arts organisations and activities as being inclusive and inviting. However it was making the offer, rather than the actual acceptance of it that was of most importance:

*...but no its not, **it's not a massive problem if they don't come**, it's a bonus if they do... and like I say I just want everyone **to feel that they can*** (Interviewee 1)

*[... ...] We have to make sure that **we are seen as being open and accessible to everyone** [...] We can't drag them kicking and screaming but we can make sure that they know about it* (Interviewee 38)

*...**there are invitations to be offered, that's what's important**...the most you can do is offer invitations...* (Interviewee 5)

***If people feel that have access** to the country's cultural offer but just choose to continue their engagement within their community, within their home, as opposed to feeling they can't access it, **that's OK**.* (Interviewee 41)

All of which is indicative of the extent to which the practice *performs* equality without quantitatively or qualitatively delivering it. It is the type of "pseudo-activity" that "overplays itself and fires itself up for the sake of its own publicity without admitting to what degree it serves as a substitute for satisfaction, thus elevating itself to an end in itself" (Adorno, 1978, p.200).

6.2.4 Supporting the status quo

This was not to say that there was no evidence of measurement around participation happening at an organisational level, only that the nature of this measurement was a little haphazard. The knowledge of it amongst the interviewees was at times vague, and the importance they placed on its content

appeared minimal as it was seen as primarily bureaucratic. As such, they were generally dismissive of it as the tone and metaphors employed indicate:

Interviewer: *Are you obliged to report anything back to government in terms of cultural engagement figures?*

Interviewee 10: *I don't know. We publish **a lot of stuff** online so I don't think we are obliged to ... but no, as far as I know **I don't think we have to report any figures***

*The last time I looked at one of these forms there were things in there about, you know, how many people of Asian descent **or whatever*** (Interviewee 3)

[Talking about a funding application]...*the last **set of hoops** we jumped through for Creative Scotland...* (Interviewee 4)

*I know that working for an organisation that's still got core funding from the government we have to report back on key performance indicators [... ...] but it often seems there are mixed messages coming through [... ...] it seems that because we are still tied into the government you know we have to **jump on certain band wagons**, or make sure that we are **seen to be taking part** in these initiatives and things like that as well ... so... I'm not sure exactly who they are benefiting all the time...* (Interviewee 1)

Furthermore, while it was clear that anyone receiving public subsidy was required to report back on its use, none of the interviewees that spoke about submitting such a report had ever found they received any feedback or sanctions in cases where they had not attracted the diversity of audience they had committed to reaching out to at the outset. One interviewee described audience diversity as something that went in the annual report but never gets asked about again: *"I have never had a conversation about it, no one has ever come back and said 'oh you've only got two' [referring to Asian audience members]"* (Interviewee 4). Another interviewee with ten years' experience in the same organisation felt that, *"If we weren't hitting such targets - and I do think there are such targets, and I don't think we hit them - nobody would beat us up about it"* (Interviewee 3). Two others acknowledged (with the proviso that they

were not identified) that they often doctored the figures they returned to their funders so as to ensure their projects reported a high degree of impact on community wellbeing. Likewise, Interviewee 21 presumed that funders must *“take for granted that there is a fuzzy glow going on and that is why you only see smiley faces on education leaflets, you don’t see the miserable ones in the corner that didn’t want to participate”*. None of these interviewees appeared concerned about any apparent deceit. They felt that these reports were never followed up so long as the funder was told that their aims were being met and that their actions were understood as evidencing inclusivity.

The perception that the reported figures were not considered in detail appeared to be founded, given that those spoken to at Creative Scotland indicated they were not looking specifically at who each funded organisation was participating with or how relatively successful they were at this compared to other organisations. Instead what they stated was that funded organisations needed to be seen to be broadly supporting the aim of supporting access and participation and *“exhibiting a willingness”* to diversify their audience:

...we don’t have the level of resource to look at the individual participants of each project...the way we are pulling back information from the organisation...I mean, again, we don’t have the ability to kind of...analyse that fully either. We are looking for kind of broad strokes. Can they say that they hit this or that aim” (Creative Scotland Staff Member)

And indeed there appears to be little sanctions if these outreach programs achieve very little with regards to changing the cultural participation preferences of those they work with. For all that subsidised organisations face consistent calls for greater accountability - most recently in the Warwick Commission (2015) - there is never any clarity or even discussion about what sanctions they should face if they fail to deliver what is required. The status of these acculturation intermediaries (Maguire & Matthews, 2010) appears not to be affected by how little they manage to increase the cultural catchment of the practices they are meant to be promoting. This thesis argues that this is because,

with regards to cultural participation, how the actions of those receiving funding are understood within the discursive field of cultural policy appears of more importance than any changes they have made, or failed to make, in practice to the patterns of participation amongst the populace.

Furthermore, even where people did participate, there was a suggestion that their participation was as much value to the organisation they participated with as it was to the individual who was participating. For example, Interviewee 41 talked about how they would reward their participants *“to say **thank you for supporting us, because that is what it is too**”*. They described outreach activities as *“an absolute double-edged sword”* in that the organisation needed them as much as they believed the participants needed the organisation, and that without them, when it came to applying for funding *“they would be fucked”*. Likewise, in the quote below, the interviewee starts to talk about what the participant would gain, but concludes the thought with what the organisation would gain: additional ambassadors and thus legitimacy for the value of their state supported organisation:

*I suppose if you think what would you gain from having ten men who go to the football every weekend, having them come to the ballet, **what would they gain** from that, for me, they would be saying to their sons, if they went to the ballet and they had a really positive experience, **they are then positive ambassadors** for us. (Interviewee 2)*

And so anyone that wants or needs their cultural participation to be supported by the state must be prepared to align their preferred type of cultural participation with that which is on offer and delegate some of their agency to the state sponsored cultural professionals in making these decisions for them¹⁷³. Indeed the more structural limitations someone does face in pursuing their interests, the more they are expected to cede their own agency and to rely on the curated choices of others to meet these needs. For all that they are to be provided with opportunities to participate, these do not extend as far as having the opportunity to participate in the decision making process about the type of

¹⁷³ This is the same relationship that Schrum has described as a status bargain (1996).

opportunities for cultural participation that public subsidy provides. Instead they are invited to “subscribe to, rather than shape, the culture that is on offer” (Holden, 2010, p.37), to regulate their conduct and values to align with those deemed as desirable for society through the guidance of acculturation intermediaries (Maguire and Matthews, 2010). And so for all that supporting non-participants and their cultural participation must be discursively espoused and practiced, it is not so that they can provide a legitimizing environment as proposed by Moore (1995), but instead that their discursive invocation legitimises the environment that they are being provided with by those who retain the greatest influence over the field.

6.3 The effect beyond the field

The effects of the discursive logics with which the problem of non-participation is constructed do not only affect the practice that takes place within the field of cultural policy. Rather it becomes part of the wider system of dividing practices that affirms the inequality that it professes to address. The final section of this chapter will consider in more detail the assertion that rather than removing inequality, the construction of cultural non-participation as a problem and its associated practices contribute towards the acceptance of inequality as inevitable.

6.3.1 Choice is a political act

At an event attended by the researcher at which they presented their work in progress, a member of the audience challenged them on the argument that they were making. They suggested that even if cultural participation policies were focused on a limited range of organisations and activities, selected by cultural professionals and about which the majority of the public were not interested, was this really such a bad thing in itself? They described the current system as being “*at worst benign*”. This researcher argues that this is not the case. It is not the case because culture is arguably all about choice, whether that is at the level of the individual or the state. The question of state subsidies is therefore no different. Even if funding was tripled there would still be organisations, individuals, activities and objects that would receive no support. Likewise there

would be those individuals who were left to overcome the genuine barriers they face to participating with that which they wanted to participate but found themselves unable to access in an unregulated market. As Lesley Riddoch reminds us:

There are too many artefacts, too many traditions and too many distinct cultures to fit into the pint pots of funding streams, exhibitions spaces, official events or time in the school curriculum. **There is no way to avoid choice and choice is a political act** ... the dilemma remains. Which artists to choose? Which performance to fund? And who should decide? (2014, pp.273–274, emphasis added)

The need to discriminate is not in question but what is an issue is the concentration of power within the process of discrimination (Pinnock, 2006). For Riddoch's assertion could be further refined to acknowledge that choice is an individual act that becomes political when one person's choices, one person's values are granted greater status by the state than another's, and that in turn this then affirms the status of that individual. As Connor notes, "culture is in a sense synonymous with value" (1992, p.234) and any question of culture is a question about power, freedom and equality (Holden, 2010; Adorno, in Bernstein 2001). The problem construction of cultural non-participation is such that it serves to problematise certain values and in doing so denies rather than affirms the equality of those it claims to assist. For just as Holden notes, it is not only the case that "people can be economically deprived and unequal [they can also be] culturally deprived and unequal" (2010, p.31). Not simply in terms of what they can access but also in terms of the recognition that their culture receives by the state and the rights they have to make value claims about the practices they undertake.

6.3.2 Constraining the possibility of experience

For in their need to problematise the agency of those who do not subscribe to the values of the Arts, cultural professionals are discursively denying those

labelled as non-participants the ability to locate and legitimate a social practice as comparable in value to that which the cultural professionals claim for an interaction with a manifestation of the Arts. As such, the dominant discourses of cultural participation within the field of cultural policy are, to paraphrase Sacks, placing constraints for some on the very possibility of having an experience:

The occasions of entitlement to have them are carefully regulated, and the experiences you are entitled to have on an occasion that you are entitled to have one is further carefully regulated (1971, p.428)

Because while the majority of advocates for the Arts have been promoting a discourse in which equality is understood as primarily being about future access to that which is funded, they have been complicit in a simultaneous discourse that insidiously devalues the experiences that happen outside of this system. In doing so they question to the point of denial the capacity of those labelled as non-participants to both think and feel for themselves about what forms of practice they value. The discursive practice of cultural policy is not orientated towards recognising and supporting the diversity of activity that takes place in society. It remains couched in the discursive logics of the Arts' transformative capacities in which the right dose of exposure will help someone to adapt their practice to the benefit of their position in society. Through internalising the technologies of the self (Foucault, 2003b [1982]), and in so doing abandoning their deleterious preferences, subjectivities, and values, the non-participant can embrace a more preferable pattern of cultural participation - a more enriching pattern of cultural participation - one that it is promised will transform them and their less than optimal life through making the material inequality that they may face evaporate in a cloud of aesthetic transcendence.

With regards to this necessity for non-participants to alter their values, it is interesting to note that Creative Scotland sees one of its primary objectives over the next decade as being about doing just that:

*We want Scotland to be a place where the arts, screen and creative industries **are valued** and recognised...* (Creative Scotland, 2014c, p.6)

*Arts and creativity **will be valued**...* (Creative Scotland, 2014c, p.6)

***We want a Scotland where everyone actively values** and celebrates arts and creativity...* (Creative Scotland, 2014c, p.13)

***Foster an environment where participants, audiences and consumers value** and can confidently engage with the arts, screen and creative industries* (Creative Scotland, 2014c, p.18)

*We believe these are essential to the thriving, engaged and **valued** arts, screen and creative industries in Scotland.* (Creative Scotland, 2014c, p.24)

The choice of verbs and use of the future tense in these extracts indicate that not everyone in Scotland is understood to currently value the arts, screen and creative industries, even despite Fiona Hyslop's assertion that "[Scotland] is a nation that truly values its creative talents and heritage" (2013). It can perhaps be assumed that this is because too many people are perceived as failing to value them in the right way, because they fail to do so from within the discursive logics of the Arts. Arguably, the threat that the Arts must negate is not that people don't value the Arts, but that the institution is failing to effectively manage the manner in which people do.

6.3.3 Affirming dividing practices

The impact of the discursive subjectification of some individuals as non-participants and the inequality that this subjectification affirms is not limited to the field of cultural policy alone. As has been discussed in Chapter 4, the institutional discourses of the Arts and the state are bound together, in part through affirming the dividing practices of the other. As such, the existence of the problem of cultural non-participation supports the logics of social mobility and the assumed justice of a meritocracy that have been the dominant discourses of equality employed by the state since the Thatcher governments of

the nineteen eighties. They are discourses that allow those with the most social, economic and cultural advantage to talk about “equality of opportunities rather than equality of conditions” (Jones, 2012, p.97). The logic of these discourses locate the blame for inequality at the feet of those who have the least (Levitas, 2004, 2005). Their failure to guarantee and secure their own equality is represented as the result of a flawed subjectivity and concomitant inability to adopt the values and habits of those that they should seek to emulate. Where structural factors are considered they are represented, just as it is in the current case, as barriers to those opportunities, organisations and activities that would help to adjust these flawed subjectivities and thus allow these individuals to tackle their own social, political and economic deprivation. The discursive construction of cultural non-participation as a problem is thus another example of the extent to which “issues once considered ‘social’ have come increasingly to be thought of as ‘cultural’” whereby concerns about identity, empowerment, belonging and inclusion have “superseded questions of material entitlements” (McGuigan, 2004, p.34). The poor are no longer poor but are instead culturally excluded non-participants, and if they behaved more like those with the greatest privilege then they would not find themselves so deprived.

While Jones (2012) has used the somewhat more inflammatory term of ‘demonization’, his broad assertion is one that this thesis agrees with, albeit that it would alter it so as to suggest that it is the construction of certain subjectivities as problematic that is the backbone of an unequal society. For the notion of social progress and equality being delivered through addressing inequality of knowledge and experience at the level of the problematic individual is what makes contemporary inequality “appear utterly apparent and obvious – or ‘sensible’, to use Rancière’s term” (Pelletier, 2009, p.114). It is firstly reliant upon a truth that is identified as such by those able to employ the most power within specific fields, and secondly upon equality being understood as something that can be granted through gradually educating others in this truth and encouraging their behaviour to align with it. As some of the interviewees stated:

*..but **we know** that what we do is good for people and I want people to actually have that benefit [... ...] all of those things that **we know** are true of engagement and cultural participation. (Interviewee 19)*

*...of course we are providing them with what they should want, because, because we flatter ourselves that **we know** what we are curating, and that **we appreciate and know some of the complexities of it so we are trying to, in the nicest possible way, educate people about that...** (Interviewee 17)*

It is a logic that is indicative of the extent to which Bourdieu (1986) and his conception of cultural capital has been adopted, adapted and embedded in the discourses of cultural policy in defence of the status quo. Cultural capital is represented as something tangible that can be granted to others through appropriate social interactions and through these interactions the non-participant would come to value that which is valued by those with the greatest social status. Many of those that invoke the work of Bourdieu tend towards teaching and sharing what they believe they know to be true to those “constituted as unable to overcome an incapacity, because they are captured by the logic of bodily practice” (Pelletier, 2009, p.113). Bourdieu’s analysis of the division of knowledge and experience between social groups is thus employed as an explanation of inequality. As a consequence of their habitus the cultural non-participant cannot effectively engage because they cannot successfully employ and negotiate the dominant discourses of culture within the society of which they are a part. Because they cannot engage in these discourses they are thus excluded from advantageous social interaction that might alleviate their material deprivation. However, as was discussed in Chapter 2, while Bourdieu’s concept was offered as an application of how the materially privileged create a barrier between themselves and everyone else, it is employed in the discourses of policy in relation to the materially deprived and their inability to integrate into mainstream society (Barry 2002 cited in Levitas, 2004). The solution is represented as a need for the state to provide a type of remedial habitus through providing the ‘right sort’ of opportunities. As such, the taken for

granted assumption is that the supposed non-participant should need or want to participate with that which cultural professionals tell them they should so as to gain greater equality with the most materially advantaged in society. If they refuse through not acting as required and failing to take up the opportunities offered to them then they legitimate their own deprivation.

6.3.4 The presumption of inequality

A counter argument to this can be made by drawing on the thinking of Rancière (Rancière, 2005; Hallward, 2005; Rancière, 2004). From this perspective the non-participant can be understood as politically disenfranchised because the discourses of cultural policy are built upon the discourses of the Arts and thus the non-participants' own discourses of cultural participation are not treated or heard as equal by those who dominate the field. This is similar to what Pelletier has argued is the case in education, for the suggestion that there is a problem of cultural non-participation is primarily "the idea of those who give themselves the authority of reducing the inequality of others with respect to themselves" (2009, p.123). In so doing they legitimise and enhance the social and cultural inequalities that do exist outside of the field in question. Such an approach does not sufficiently consider why one manifestation of cultural capital is accepted as more optimal than another. It assumes that the advantage one might gain from discursively practicing a particular form of cultural capital is warranted and that as such the objective of the state should be focused on equalising access to and participation with the sites at which it can be fostered. As Pelletier notes but that also has relevance for the current argument:

In Bourdieu's work, the education system's democratic claims conceal the reality of inequality. In Rancière's work, the visibility of such claims, their proclamation and celebration, is the naturalization of inequality. In other words, equality is not an illusion that conceals inequality; rather, equality (in the future) is precisely that which legitimises the presupposition of inequality (in the present). (2009,p.125)

From this perspective the Arts is not part of the solution to social inequality, it is part of the cause, for its institutional discourses are part of the dominant distribution of the sensible (Rancière, 2004). Just as Jones (2012) has argued that the discourse of 'chav-hate'¹⁷⁴ does, constructing the cultural participation patterns of some as a problem becomes yet one more way in which the unequal status of some in society can be explained and therefore accepted as sensible and even inevitable. In validating the supremacy of one type of cultural capital and therefore "being culturally exclusive, [the Arts] have helped to institutionalise the socially excluded in a pernicious way" (Kawashima, 2006, p.67). Just as the degree to which possessing the cultural capital of the dominant faction affects status, so too "does the way that [the dominant] culture represent the poor and disadvantaged by reinforcing their position in society and confirming their low status and exclusion" (Holden, 2010, p.23). This is an act that is achieved "through defining desirable and undesirable models of agency, that is, implicitly and widely shared conceptions of how [someone should] feel, think and act in the world" (Snibbe and Markus 2005 cited in Ollivier, 2008, p.124).

It is on this basis that this thesis understands the problem construction of cultural non-participation, along with its associated discourses and practices. It is an example of the technologies of behavioural management that are employed by the state in their attempt to manage and regulate the practice of individuals. The insidious suggestion is that if only those individuals labelled as non-participants were to participate with the Arts, then they would no longer be materially disadvantaged. Yet the Arts did not cause poverty and inequality, and neither can it solve it. However the discursive logic of the problem construction does act to maintain it. For although the cultural capital gained from participating with the Arts may offer some help to escape poverty, it only does so because it offers the opportunity for those that allow the technologies to modify their behaviour to legitimately leave behind those that do not.

¹⁷⁴ Jones does not refer to it as a discourse but given how he describes this phenomenon it is how this researcher has understood it.

6.3.5 The presumption of equality

From Rancière's perspective equality is not the end game, it is not something that is to be granted or provided via the successful delivery of certain actions or interventions by those who already have it. Instead he offers a different starting point, one in which equality is not conceived of quantitatively because to do so would be pointless. Instead, equality it is to be presumed in all things. It is a relational conception of equality and emancipation and is about its societal acknowledgment, affirmation and verification. In this regard, Rancière is broadly aligned with the perspective of Richard Rorty, who believed that in adopting a pragmatist perspective one should dispense with the project of emancipation because "there has never been anything to emancipate and that human nature has never been in chains" (Rorty, 1985, cited in Connor, 1992, p. 237). Once equality is presumed, there is a moral imperative for any polity claiming to be a liberal democracy to ensure that everyone has the literacy and leisure to "listen to lots of different people, think about what they say" (Rorty, 1989 p.84) and form their own opinions. However no vehicle for achieving this should be valorized over any other and what should be welcomed is an ever-increasing multiplicity of ways in which this might occur.

From this viewpoint the cultural value one person gains from watching the latest blockbuster movie, going to their local pub to take part in karaoke or constructing a new world in *MineCraft* should not be seen as any more real or valuable than that which someone may gain from going to the ballet or taking part in life drawing. Neither should cultural intermediaries and their capacity to cultivate the cultural content of any practice (De Propriis and Mwaura, 2013) be required in order to explain the value of the that practice in relation to the discursive logics of the Arts in order for it to be acknowledged as culturally valuable. If the discourses of cultural policy were to start from a presumption of equality then what becomes problematic is not that one person does not apportion the same value to the ballet that another does, but that the cultural values of one individual are given greater privilege by the state than the cultural values of another. That for some, the activities, organisations and objects that

they value participation with could, for various reasons, be increasingly inaccessible to them, but that this is not understood as a problem to which the resources of the state can, or should, be applied.

And so, with regards to cultural policy, presuming equality at the level of the individual demands striving for *equity* in practice. Cultural equity is not about being granted access to that which others value but that the individual does not, it is the ability to express oneself freely and in a manner that the individual perceives to be valuable based on what they feel and think. To be able to do so is an indicator of freedom and an expression of power. If cultural policy is to help address social injustice and affirm equality rather than reinforce inequality it must be concerned with recognising and supporting the cultural values of everyone, not focused on affirming the value of the institution that has discursively dominated the field of cultural policy since its inception. Cultural equity can only be achieved if governments “shift the focus of cultural policy away from institutional fiefdoms and cultural forms, and focus instead on people” (Holden, 2010, p.59).

Because progressive cultural policy should not be about cultivating adherents to the dominant culture – which in the present case is a culture in which the Arts exists as a unique field of human activity - but should instead cultivate a “confidence that results in an individual being able to contribute to the development of culture[s], rather than merely appreciating [or valuing] what already exists” (Holden, 2010, p.23). It is a perspective that arguably requires the adoption of what Jensen describes as an expressive logic of culture (2002, 2003) and which she bases on the work of John Dewey (1934). This position should not be understood as cultural relativism for such a “collapse into unity is only the inverse product of the absolute fixation on value that is the characteristic of the [existing] model” (Connor, 1992, p.251). As such, a cultural equity perspective does not require that distinctions are denied, abolished or collapsed, rather that:

...distinctions are important because they are important to the participants. Lines of demarcation between good and bad culture are endlessly being constructed, sustained, repaired and transformed. These distinctions matter, but they matter because they are part of an evaluative ritual – the ceremony of making and protecting worthiness” (Jensen, 2002, p.198)

Acknowledging that no value judgement is any better than another in the sense of being an objectively truer statement in no way disallows the possibility of making meaningful value judgements. “It is just that the value of those value judgements must be understood, evaluated and compared otherwise, that is, as something other than ‘truth-value’ or ‘validity’ in the objectivist, essential sense” (Smith, 1988, p.98). The aim of policy should be to make possible “the collective transaction of cultural value” (Connor, 1992, p.251), through establishing conditions that “precede and surpass the hardening of the value of art and culture into the forms of fetish” (1992, p.251). While the pragmatics of policy would require what Hall (1993) has described as the temporary closure of meaning, subsequent policy interventions should seek to disrupt those meanings, demanding the constant substitution of one form of expression for another, allowing different and diverse identity projects to prosper. All attempts to fix the play of value should be resisted and in so doing value would be constantly deferred in favour of the imperative to value. It is the belief of this researcher that adopting such a perspective at the level of policy making would severely disrupt the process by which the value judgements of some become accepted as universal values for all. Values that in turn are employed to discursively legitimate systems of societal Distinction (Bourdieu, 1986) in which inequality is represented as both inevitable and sensible (Rancière, 2004).

Summary

This chapter has argued that alongside the discursive construction of the non-participant, the potential for a network of cultural professionals was also established whose claim to expertise has allowed them to exert greater

influence on the field of cultural policy through their attempts to manage the dominant discourses by which it functions. The status granted by the discourses of the Arts to these cultural professionals has always been fundamental to the work of discursively legitimising the relationship between the Arts and the state, however competing societal discourses about the structure of society and the nature of government have increasingly required that they employ additional discursive practices in order to enforce their own legitimacy and the legitimacy of the claims they make. In turn this has resulted in an increasing need for the type of discursive legitimisation work evident within the data generated for this study as those with the greatest status seek to perform equality through their practice. For what cannot be abandoned is the assumption that there is such a thing as the Arts, the unique artistic experience that interactions with manifestations of the Arts are seen to offer, and those who for whatever reason are not having them. These logics cannot be abandoned because they are central to the institutional discourse upon which the Arts is based, and around which its relationship with the state has been established. As such, affirming the existence of the non-participant becomes ever more discursively important for cultural professionals, for although it is increasingly the case that the Arts cannot be defined in absolute terms, the possibility of the non-participant is enough to affirm that not everything can afford the unique experience that the Arts lays claims to. As such, the mediation of experts remains necessary and the continuation of state support on the grounds of provision remains plausible.

In affirming the identity of the non-participant, those who employ this subject identity to talk about others – such as the interviewees in the present research – are engaged in an act of micro power that suppresses the capacity of some to speak within the field of cultural policy. Instead, their voices are co-opted by those cultural professionals in order to affirm the status quo and manage cultural policy towards their own advantage. The result being that despite the policy rhetoric around supporting the cultural participation of all, in actuality this is a performative practice that is about affirming the value of the Arts and

the legitimacy of its existing relationship with the state. And so for all that tackling the problem of cultural non-participation appears highly altruistic, the opportunities that are provided by those paid to reach out remain controlled by cultural professionals who claim to know what it is people should want to do in order to have the sort of experience that will provide them with the enrichment their life supposedly lacks.

This discourse manifests itself in the decision making practices of cultural policy that are primarily conducted as a closed discussion between policymakers and those cultural professionals seen to possess the most expertise (Jancovich, 2015b). For although co-creation (Walmsley, 2013) may be welcome when customizing the offer, when decisions are made about what offers will be supported with public subsidy the public lose their right to speech, as the cultural professionals co-opt their voice. As such, the opportunity to participate is perhaps better understood as an offer to “subscribe to, rather than shape the culture that is on offer” (Holden, 2010, p.37). The manner in which the problem of cultural non-participation is constructed affirms an assumption that in order to gain cultural equality one must be prepared to embrace certain cultural values and accept the status and legitimacy of the cultural professionals whose ability to execute power in decision-making ensures that one culture remains valorized over all others.

‘In the real’ (Schwartz-Shea & Yanow 2012) there is no one who is a cultural non-participant, but the discursive existence of the non-participant subject obscures the extent to which there are what Holden (2010) has described as the culturally and creatively disenfranchised: those individuals whose choices and opinions are not valued to the same degree as others. And so this thesis argues that this means cultural policy is dominated by professionals who cannot accept anyone not sharing their particular cultural values, beliefs, and the discursive logics they are based on, for to do so would be to put their own elevated status in question. The result is that cultural policy remains elitist. Not always socially or economically elite, but culturally elite. Through encouraging the abandonment of the cultural non-participant as an object within the discourse,

this thesis offers a perspective on how such cultural domination might finally be disrupted.

Conclusion

Increased public participation in decision making has been argued to be part of a reflexive modernity that brought with it a greater demand by individuals to understand why they were being encouraged to do something, borne out of a diminished reverence for the elite classes (Prieur and Savage, 2011). Yet cultural policy has managed to avoid such demands and is still primarily the product of cultural elites (Jancovich 2015; Schlesinger 2009a; see also Fennell *et al.* 2009) who exert significant control over how culture should be shaped and do so in such a manner that it affirms their own societal status. One of the key contributions made by this thesis is in moving beyond simply highlighting these asymmetric power relationships to offer an argument as to how they have managed to be sustained in the face of such consistent pressure for change. For only by understanding how asymmetric relations of power are maintained might one start to disrupt them. The thesis has done this through offering a detailed discussion about how the discursive construction of non-participation as a problem, and in particular the non-participant as a problematic subject, helps to legitimise the dominance of cultural professionals while simultaneously limiting the capacity of those with different perspectives to speak in relation to what sort of cultural participation is of value, and how the state might best support their participation with that which they value. Such construction of subjects as objects in a discourse, combined with managing the sensible relationships between them, obscures the use of power within the social relations to which they are applied.

This concluding chapter will now summarise the arguments that have been made and offer some reflections about what they might mean for cultural policy, and how, if at all, an alternative approach to supporting cultural participation might be taken.

i. Non-participation: A discursive problematisation

This research set out to answer the question: Why is there a problem of cultural non-participation? However the argument of this thesis is that no exogenous problem of cultural participation exists ‘in the real’ (Bacchi, 2009). This is not to

argue that differences do not exist in the degree to which individuals interact with various types of organisations and activities, or that different people make different choices about how to spend their time. Neither is it suggested that there are no structural limitations that stop individuals from both interacting with organisations and activities for the first time and continuing to interact in the manner they wish with those that they value. Instead this thesis questions why such variations in patterns of participation should be represented as a problem and specifically one requiring state intervention to address. In answer to this question, the thesis has argued that the problem of cultural non-participation exists because it is an essential component of both the discursive construction of the Arts as an institution and that the subject of the non-participant is a fundamental boundary object upon which the legitimacy of the Arts' relationship with the state is based. It is a problem construction that is maintained by the statements and practice of cultural professionals who benefit significantly from its continuation. For sustaining the existence of the problem affirms the dividing practices that the discourses of the Arts produce, and in so doing sustains the right of cultural professionals to exercise the most power within the field of cultural policy. Ultimately, this leads to cultural protectionism and cultural participation policies that perform equality, access and inclusion, in order to maintain the dominance of an institution based on inequality, division and exclusion. The rhetoric of the Arts may be progressive, inclusive and egalitarian but in practice it adopts the divisionary logic of that against which it supposedly seeks to act.

Holden speaks of a culture war¹⁷⁵ in which battles are raging on two fronts, "the first concerns who has access to what has traditionally been defined as 'culture' and the second is about who gets to decide what 'culture' is in the first place" (2010, p.9). But it is the argument of this thesis that the first of these is a performative practice that keeps the majority of those seeking greater equality engaged in a comparatively inconsequential and potentially endless skirmish about how the state subsidised Arts can best reach out to a discursively

¹⁷⁵ As does Jensen, 2002.

constructed non-participant while the war is lost on the other front. Because it is there that the network of cultural professionals manages the subject identity of the non-participant. As has been argued, it is a discursive identity applied to those who have no interest in the opportunities for cultural participation that the state subsidises. The construction of which allows these individuals to be brought into a dialectical relationship with the Arts in such a manner as to negate the legitimacy of their agency while affirming the unique value of the artistic experience, the cultural professionals who recognise it, and the privileged relationship of the Arts with the state.

And so it continues to be the case that those that seek to manage cultural participation represent it as something that transcends the political, obscuring the fact that legitimacy about cultural policy decisions “spring not from democracy, but from elite authority” (Street, 2011, p.382). It is an authority that is based on claims to knowledge and a cultivated sensibility that others are represented as lacking. It is this lack that is then used to explain the failure of some to act in the same manner that others do, suggest that these individuals have an inability to enrich their own lives, and legitimate the necessity for others to speak on their behalf in the field of cultural policy. Despite the talk of participation, public value, co-creation, and a cultural policy that is “*of us all*” (Hyslop, 2013) the underlying logic of the dominant discourses of cultural policy are little changed. They continue to adhere to the discourses of the Arts and thus focus on a liberal humanist aspiration to increase exposure to those activities and organisations that have been identified by a network of cultural professionals as being of greatest value, by virtue of their potential to offer a unique and enriching experience. Little consideration is given with regards to ensuring “popular control over the means of cultural production, redefining what counts as ‘culture’, and participation [in decision making] for groups hitherto excluded by the established structures of patronage” (McGuigan, 2004, p.40).

For all that the problem is represented as a lack of opportunities, it is a lack of opportunities for which the solution is represented as being supported access to

a market of activities curated by those that claim to know what is of greatest value and thus what should and should not receive subsidy. Decisions about what these activities should be are seen to be legitimate if taken by a narrow group of individuals, represented as experts in culture and whose expertise allows them to make value judgements about what is best for others. What this suppresses is any consideration that it is not the subsidised organisations' audience that needs to be diversified but rather that a greater diversity of organisations and activities needs to be publicly subsidised on the basis of decisions made by a greater diversity of people, in a greater diversity of ways. Neither is it considered that there may be a need for a societal redistribution of time and money to allow everyone to make fully autonomous decisions about the activities they want to participate with in the open market where the majority of contemporary cultural participation takes place.

That is because the extent to which some are denied the right to speak means that as it stands, cultural policy ignores how cultural participation is in favour of an idea of how cultural professionals believe that cultural participation should be. This matters, because as Jensen reminds us, "if we live by stories, and seek the best stories by which to live, then we must first figure out what stories we are already telling ourselves, so that we can decide if we like where they are taking us" (2002, p.117). The persistence of a story about cultural non-participants – the potential for which were established with the constitution of the Arts over two hundred years ago - means that as Garnham pointed out in 1983, "one cannot understand the culture of our time or the challenges and opportunities which that dominant culture offers to public policy-makers" (cited in McGuigan, 2004, chap.42). The asymmetric power relationship upon which the Arts was established means that for all that the rhetoric of cultural policy is saturated with liberal, egalitarian and even revolutionary ideas, they will all inevitably flounder in "the gap between the "juridical people and the empirical people [...] the ideal and the real, the utopian and the present" (Miller and Yudice, 2002, p.25). Its focus will remain permanently orientated towards the operation of sedimented values while failing to adequately acknowledge the

imperative to value that is a fundamental aspect of life (Connor, 1992) and integral to an individual's freedom.

ii. Upsetting the institutionalised inequity

Creative Scotland has made much use of the undefined phrase 'cultural ecology' (CS, 2011) that evokes imagery of an ecosystem that must be nurtured so as to maintain its natural balance and facilitate growth. Yet as with nature, a balance cannot be found by focusing solely on selected aspects of a biome. However both Creative Scotland and the majority of organisations and artists that they support¹⁷⁶ exhibit a continued preference for focusing on a narrow portion of the supply side of the equation. They take the established approach of strengthening the Arts so as "to meet the twin objectives of artistic excellence and extending public reach and participation" (Knell & Taylor, 2011, p.21). In apparently excluding certain people from any dialogue about how cultural provision in Scotland should be developed, cultural professionals continue to suppress the agency of those whose cultural participation the Scottish Government claims that they want to support. At best, the location at which greater participation can be sensibly supported is represented as being the point of delivery and not the point at which the decisions about what will be supported are made. Similarly to Holden (2006) and (Jancovich, 2011, 2015b) this thesis argues that in order to establish what Moore (1995) has described as an authorizing environment, closed conversations between any form of cultural elite must be rejected in favour of a more multi-dimensional dialogue that takes into account a far greater range of perspectives about what cultural policy is for and how cultural participation can best be supported.

As Lee *et al.* have noted, Moore conceived of public value as a process demanding deliberation and dialogue, not a technocratic process of aggregating the stated satisfaction of individuals (2011)¹⁷⁷. As such, this is not an argument

¹⁷⁶ It should be noted that there is no evidence as to the extent that the opinions of the artists in question represent the majority of those working in the sector that receive no public subsidy.

¹⁷⁷ It should be noted that Lee *et.al.* do question if public value could ever be usefully employed to shape policy, an assertion that Gray (2008) concurs with.

for what may be dismissed as a populist approach to cultural provision. It accepts that many other arguments may be made about values and benefits that are equally important and may not correspond to the type of cultural opportunities that some wish to participate with. Neither is it suggesting that the state should not be involved in supporting cultural participation. The argument is that if the state truly wishes to address the inequity that exists between the ability of different individuals to participate with the sort of organisations and activities they choose, then the discourses of the Arts and the cultural professionals whose status it supports should not continue to dominate the field of cultural policy.

In order to finally upset this institutionalised inequity a shift would be required in how cultural policy decisions are made away from a model in which certain people are shut out on the basis of their ignorance about how best to lead an enriching life. Instead it would require organisations like Creative Scotland to act as facilitators of a dialogue between policymakers, professionals and the public, none of whom should be labelled as non-participants for this alters the manner in which the values they express are understood. Everyone should be seen as a cultural participant in order to place the focus on the differential conditions that people face in pursuing his or her participation. It would also require recognition that cultural policy cannot be side-lined as the responsibility of a single government department or delivered solely through the distribution of limited funds, for cultural participation is a label applied to social activity that crosses the public, private and third sectors; albeit that governments have significant influence over how patterns of cultural participation develop through the framework of all of their policies, from town planning to taxation, curriculum content to commercial regulation (Holden, 2010).

The Scottish Government circulated a memorandum to all local authorities and government departments explaining that “*culture delivers*” (2008) and as Chapter 2 of this thesis showed, countless research has attempted to make

claims about the absolute value of culture and in particular the value of participation with it. However this thesis proposes that such a focus be inverted so that research and policy makers begin to ask how all levels of government can ensure that everyone can include more of the cultural participation they value in their lives. The Arts will inevitably be a part of that patchwork of participation, but they are not - and should not - be all of it. However having these sort of approaches adopted is one thing, the difficulty in ensuring that they offer a real potential for change, rather than a performative process that simply affirms pre-set agendas and taken for granted power relationships is well discussed (Ostrom, 1996). Returning once again to the thoughts of Raymond Williams:

The question that has to be faced, if we may put it for a moment in one of Tawney's analogies, is whether the known gold will be more widely spread, or whether, in fact, there will be a change of currency. If the social and economic changes which Tawney recommends are in fact effected, it is the latter, the change of currency, which can reasonably be expected (1971 [1958], p.222-223)

While at first reading this quote might seem to capture the sentiment that this research seeks to advance, the metaphor employed falls short of the true extent of the change that advancing cultural equity would require. For all that one might change the currency, if the new currency is simply adopted into the old system of exchange then little has altered other than the physical qualities of the assets that are accepted as valuable. And it is exactly this that has allowed Arts policy to be rebranded as cultural policy with little change to the asymmetric power relationships by which it functions.

As it stands, it is arguably impossible for cultural policy to be thought of outside of the institutional discourses of the Arts, a difficulty that is also evident in the extent to which, in the main, even scholars that critique the romantic basis of the Arts and its transcendent value do so by attempting to refashion rather than

abandon it. One of the outcomes of the Cultural Studies discipline associated in the UK with the work of individuals like Richard Hoggart, Raymond Williams, Paul Willis, Angela McRobbie and Stuart Hall¹⁷⁸ was arguably to have that which was labelled as popular culture valued to the same degree and against the same criteria that the high culture of the Arts was. As Barker states, Cultural Studies opened up popular culture for study “by bringing the tools and concepts of art and literature to bear on it” (2005, p.59). The problem was represented as a failure of those with power to recognise the true value of the cultural preferences of the majority. While it could be suggested that this was an emancipatory endeavor, it can also be argued that it merely seeks to rearrange the classificatory system rather than challenging the need for such practice to be classified.

From this perspective, such endeavors can be seen as supporting the consensual status quo by adhering to the institutional discourses of the Arts and the necessity of their experts and professionals to validate that that is to be accepted as valuable. For to be valued, popular culture had to be seen to offer an experience equivalent to that which was supposedly afforded by the dominant manifestations of the Arts. In turn this meant that legitimate cultural participation could not exist anywhere until it has been observed and validated by someone other than the individual that has experienced it, specifically those whose discursive identity legitimates them to know. Elites and their expertise were still required to explain what was represented as the true value that someone might gain from listening to popular music, as much as they were required to explain the value of listening to opera. Informed by their Marxist pedigree, such perspectives mean that the majority of the public is represented as always being in need of some sort of cultural intermediary to explain to them why the forms of cultural participation that they most enjoy are of value. There

¹⁷⁸ The discipline of Cultural Studies has a geographic and intellectual base far bigger than that which is mentioned here, however given the UK focus of the present study the Birmingham Centre for Cultural Studies is the most pertinent. For wider discussion about the development of Cultural Studies as a discipline see Barker (2005).

is always assumed to be a truth that they have failed to understand, and which their experience alone is not sufficient to give them knowledge of.

Egalitarian as some may believe this sounds it is an impossible desire if one accepts that no truth can be taught because the knowledge of both the teacher and the taught is equally constructed by and filtered through the discourses, institutions and identities that constitute and divide society into that which can be known (Danaher *et al.*, 2000). And so even those cultural professionals whose participatory intents are genuinely emancipatory are so wedded to the core discursive logics of the Arts - the same logics that grant them their own elevated status - that such change may be as good as impossible for them to facilitate. For all relations, be them oppression, exploitation cooperation or solidarity, are “irredeemably contaminated by mastery and the social weight of domination” (Hallward, 2005, p.42). True equality requires - and indeed must remain - fully independent of any social mediation. Therefore any attempts at facilitating the interaction of those labelled as cultural non-participants with those cultural professionals that can currently exert the greatest power and influence in the field can never be anything more than a discursive practice that at best results in a renegotiation by the dominated of the terms of their domination.

Indeed was a society of cultural equals to be possible, it should not even require such expert mediation, for as Rancière notes:

Such a society would repudiate the division between those who know and those who don't, between those who possess or don't possess the property of intelligence. It would only know minds in action: people who do, who speak about what they are doing, and who thus transform all their works into ways of demonstrating the humanity that is in them as in everyone (1991, p.71)

Considering the nature of this assertion and returning to Williams' quote cited above, one is presented with the real challenge faced by those who claim to value both the Arts and equality:

...there is an unresolved contradiction, which phrases about broadening and enriching merely blur, between the recognition that a culture must grow and the hope that '**existing standards of excellence**' may be preserved intact. (Williams, 1971 [1958], p.222-223, emphasis added)

While 'standards of excellence' might be understood in the more material sense as those canonical cultural artefacts and systems of practice that are pointed to as the models of an agreed system of value, it can also be understood as the system of value itself. A structure of rules established and maintained through an institutional authority by which value can be apportioned, but that depends on embedded inequality so as to grant legitimacy to the appointed representatives of that institution. From this perspective, changing what is understood as being a manifestation of the Arts is simply part of the game of truths inherent to its institutional discourses and upon which inequality is accepted as inevitable. To return to Williams' financial analogy, it is the system of exchange and the value structures on which it is based that must be replaced if a new order is to take hold. It must begin from the assumption of equality with regards to everyone's status as a cultural participant, both in terms of what he or she does and why he or she does it. The constraints on the possibility of experience must be abandoned and the ability to feel, think, value and speak in the field of cultural policy acknowledged for every person. As Rancière has argued:

...every [person] who has a soul was born with a soul. In universal teaching we believe that [everyone] feels pleasure and pain, and that it is only up to [them] to know when, how, and by what set of circumstances [they] felt this pleasure or pain (1991, p.67)¹⁷⁹

¹⁷⁹ This quote has been altered to remove the somewhat ironic gender bias that the original translation includes.

Based on this argument, this thesis argues that if there is to be any possibility of disrupting the institutional discursive path dependency that dominates the field of cultural policy then creating the discursive conditions in which this would be possible is essential. For while Jancovich is right to note that despite nearly two decades of public consultations in the cultural sector, the “public’s chosen forms of cultural expression and engagement” are still not seen as valid (2011, p.273), it is because neither these individuals nor their capacity to speak about what they value are seen as valid either. Therefore, as it stands, any dialogue would not be a dialogue between equals because of the manner in which the discursive identity of the cultural non-participant has been constructed. Anyone that might have different cultural values is represented as not credible to contribute to any discussion on cultural policy other than from their subjugated voice as a non-participant in need of inclusion through the mediation of cultural professionals. This is important because it should not be presumed that the purpose of such dialogue is to result in an ever-greater number of activities being valued as cultural participation, because as it stands being valued as cultural participation means being valued within the discursive logics of the Arts. And it is this that needs to be disrupted if an emancipatory cultural policy is ever to be achieved. For equality cannot be attained if, in order to have one’s practice valued, it must be mediated through the cultural values of another. As Holden has argued, “no one should be excluded from any sort of cultural activity, but more importantly, as a matter of social justice, nor should they be excluded from helping to define what culture means [to them]” (Holden, 2010, p.13). However, such an aspiration can only be realised if everyone is given a legitimate right to speak about the practice that they value and the manner in which they value it.

iii. Valuing the imperative to value

Creative Scotland’s stated desire for the Arts to be valued uses it as a verb that means to apportion a high worth to something. But of course value also has another meaning as a verb: the action of judging value, of apportioning what one perceives the worth of something to be, of *evaluation*. In this sense it is impossible not to value the Arts or any other object, organisation, person or

concept with which one comes into contact. Every time someone has an experience, they value it. It is impossible to avoid, it is intrinsic to the experience. As Connor notes, "the process of evaluation can never be avoided" (1992, p.8). Everyone will value different things, to different degrees, for different reasons. To believe otherwise is to ignore the reality of our own lived experience. Someone may just as easily reach a negative value about an experience as a positive one, but they will have valued it in relation to the particular and unique interaction that they have had with it. In valuing the things that they choose to do because of the extent to which it meets their immediate need for simple pleasure, entertainment or whatever else they judge to be legitimate, those labelled as non-participants are not failing to participate with culture or to value the Arts. Rather they are engaging in a political action that expresses their values and in doing so challenges the existence of a normative assumption: that to participate with culture in a manner that is valuable requires some degree of participation with that which cultural professionals have legitimated as manifestations of the Arts.

State subsidies (or the lack of them) for certain activities are undoubtedly an influencing factor on patterns of cultural participation. However it is inequitable that some are having their preferred cultural participation provided at a personal cost vastly preferential to that faced by those whose needs are wholly met by the market. If the state is to recognise on one hand the increasingly rich and diverse cultures of contemporary society at the same time that it is faced with a diminishing pot of money with which to support this, then surely the time has come to think differently about how best the cultural participation choices of everyone might be supported. If the problem for government was understood as a need to support cultural equity rather than proving equality of access to the Arts, then those - such as Creative Scotland - who implement policy, would be free to focus less on maximising access to those organisations and activities that, for potentially other valid reasons, the Government funds but the majority of the public are not interested in participating with. Instead they would be able to think creatively about how to ensure everyone can equitably

pursue the 'rich cultural life' that they desire. This would necessitate a new cultural policy paradigm in which a full spectrum of possibilities are actively encouraged and valued, and in which success is judged through the satisfaction of the public with regards to the opportunities for participation available to them, irrespective of whom provides them, or of what form they take.

Furthermore, if state supported encouragement of cultural participation should also remain about challenging individuals with regards to that which they don't know because it is accepted that exposure to other types of cultural activity is a good thing, then this should surely not be limited to those currently labelled as non-participants. For whose cultural participation is not limited to some degree by that with which they are most familiar and a concomitant fear of the unknown? The dedicated opera attendee should be encouraged to attend live DJ events; the fan of ballet should be nudged towards the world of graphic novels; and local quilting groups should be reaching out to lovers of contemporary conceptual art. Neither should this be about requiring these individuals to acknowledge these other practices *as Art* in a process whereby *they* explain the value of what they interact with on existing institutional terms and using the value framework with which they are most familiar. It is not especially challenging to bring in representatives of the types of practice with which the advocates for the Arts are not familiar so as to offer sanitised or mediated performances within the physical spaces and institutional structures that they are most familiar with. Instead, these individuals should be encouraged to go to the spaces and communities in which these types of practice are based and in which the supposed cultural participant may feel as uncomfortable as the supposed non-participant is always assumed to be when faced with the unfamiliar buildings, specific social rituals, or esoteric language of the Arts. These individuals should have the value of the activity explained to them in the same manner that they have explained the value of the Arts to those they seek to persuade and in the process should find their own values, including their adherence to the uniqueness of the experience offered by the Arts challenged.

iv. Thinking outside the Arts

Holden suggests that while “the elision of culture as anthropology and culture as ‘the arts’ is regrettable, it is unavoidable” (2010, p.20), but to accept it as such is to accept the discursive power that this grants the Arts and its agents. Culture is not the Arts, and the field of cultural policy should not be constrained by the dominant discourses of a single institution no matter how pervasive. In 1978 Su Braden suggested that the “great artistic deception of the twentieth century has been to insist to all people that this [high arts] was their culture” (p.153). The present research might seek to refine this assertion to suggest that the greatest social deception of the twenty-first century has been to insist to all people that their cultural participation must be with the Arts and that valuing the Arts must be part of their culture if they wish to be valued. For culture is “a dynamic renegotiation and reinterpretation of what we are heirs to, plus the constant creation of new work and new meanings” (Holden, 2010, p.63), the Arts and its institutional discourses are but one part of this. The culturally disenfranchised will not gain social justice and cultural equity through increasing access to that which cultural professionals think that they should. As Holden (2010) has argued, the culture of an open and democratic nation must be open to contestation, adaptation and recreation, for cultural equity also demands that “every value is itself subject to the force of evaluation” (Connor, 1992, p.3). The Arts is not, as those that advocate for it tend to suggest, the ultimate tool by which this can be undertaken. Rather it is an aspect of the culture and values of certain individuals in certain nations, and as such the privileged position and normative status enjoyed by the Arts should not be exempt from any potential rupture and critique. Failing to do so is to limit the potential for any progressive cultural policy making to the horizon of the thinkable (O’Reagan, 1992a; 1992b) at which equality is performed in relation to value judgements that are assumed universal.

Researchers have spent a significant amount of time and resource attempting to explain why some people choose not to interact with the activities and organisations that receive government subsidy. On the basis of this study, it is

the belief of this researcher that the time has come to move on from this narrow endeavour. The challenge that the findings of this thesis presents to those conducting future research in this area is to consider how the dominance of the discursive logics of the Arts can be disrupted in the field of cultural policy, and in particular how the subject identity of the cultural non-participant can be eradicated. This requires a re-orientation of the debate away from questions about equal access to cultural consumption and towards the challenge of ensuring equitable influence over the means of cultural production. Cultural policy and government subsidies are a part of this, and as such there is a need to find new ways in which anyone who wants to can find that they are able to speak and be heard in the field without having their voices captured by the elite network of cultural professionals. For research to do so requires a far greater focus on the process of policymaking. Initially, there is a need to understand in specific detail how cultural policy decisions are currently made. Such rich insight can only be gained through embedded observational and ethnographic studies of a type that are, at present, rarely employed to understand the process of cultural policy making. Such studies would identify the potential points at which disruptive, action orientated research interventions could then be conducted that would challenge dominant discursive practices through establishing multi-dimensional dialogues that transgress the horizon of the thinkable (O'Reagan, 1992a; 1992b) about what cultural policy is and how it should be practiced.

However such a reorientation is not straightforward. For in the UK, valuing the Arts along with affirming the need for everyone to participate with its manifestations has become, like creativity (Osborne, 2003), some sort of moral imperative where one finds oneself hard-pressed to take any type of position in opposition to it. This poses a difficulty, because progressive cultural policymaking and the research needed to engender it requires thinking outside of the Arts. Yet it is this that too few researchers seem willing or able to do. Perhaps it is because, as Osborne (2003 citing Gell, 1992) notes when considering the difficulties faced by anyone researching in this discipline: "of all

things, we are unwilling to make a break with the myth of aestheticism, but just as one cannot be a sociologist of religion without being a methodological atheist, so one cannot be a sociologist of art and literature without being something of a methodological philistine" (2003, p.514). Osborne is not suggesting that one should be ignorant about methodology, but that for the integrity of a critical methodology one should adopt the discursive identity of the philistine. However the identity of the philistine or Neanderthal is one that is consistently derided by those that seek to defend the Arts (for example, see Barnett *et. al.*, 2015; Tusa, 2007) and it is an identity that few researchers seem keen to assume. Yet why would they given that statistics suggest their level of education places them amongst the culturally privileged whose cultural participation needs are well met by the status quo? Furthermore, if a researcher begins to question the Arts, it is hard for them to avoid questioning the legitimacy of the institution upon which their own status depends, given that the genealogy of its own institutional discourses is not that far removed from those that brought the Arts into being.

Connor argues that once established "only an institution can dissolve itself" (1992, p.3) and this is the paradox at the heart of supposedly liberal institutions orientated towards equality. To truly achieve their objective they would be required to "enable the anti-institutional diversification of value" (Connor, 1992, p.4) that would undermine their own elevated status and privilege. For all that some elite may claim progressive intentions, as Gartman notes, in practice they "have no interest in eliminating cultural authority per se, but merely in securing a greater share of it for themselves" (1991, p.439). As such, they opt to continue to conserve and reproduce the values on which their existence relies through their management of the discourses that give their practice meaning. And so the capacity to engender the change that is required in order to advance a more culturally equitable society is perhaps forever limited because of the extent to which it is impossible to think outside the discourses of the Arts and the discursive logics upon which its relationship with the state is based. For one cannot truly question the Arts from within its discursive logic and should one

attempt to disavow the Arts then the resultant subjectification as a non-participant, or philistine, quickly absorbs the would-be insurgent back into a dialectical relationship with the institution that they seek to deny. Everyone is written upon by the discourses of the Arts irrespective of what choices they make, and just as Adorno (1944) argued with regards to what he described as the 'Culture Industry', any practice that "might emerge as a point of resistance to the all-embracing unity of the system is immediately integrated and repressed" (Bernstein, 1991, p.9).

For the existence of the discursive identity of the non-participant ensures that while some may not participate with any of the physical manifestations of the Arts, they have no choice but to participate in the discourses of the institution and the logics that they reproduce. For such individuals are unknowingly taken into the dispositive and are written upon by its discourses. Having become objects in the discourse, they both legitimate the continued financial support of the state for the institution that has co-opted culture for itself, and affirm the privileged position of the cultural professionals whose social status this institution supports.

Appendices

Appendix 1.01 - The discourse of abundant participation

*Culture is a completely different thing now [...] because we have **so much access to so many different things**. (Interviewee 14)*

*I see this all the time as I travel the country. There is just a **whole lot of stuff** going on [...] from a policy and political point of view it is sometimes very difficult to keep track of what you have got [...] that is not because they haven't bothered to look, it is because it is complex and **it is deep and it is rich** and, you know, to get a real sense handle on what that ecology is, you know, it is quite a big job. (Interviewee 11)*

*There is an **awful lot of engagement**, and that is a really good news story [...] Here we are in this fabulous city **with all of these cultural riches and all of this opportunity** and whatever people choose to do that is fine. (Interviewee 38)*

*Scotland, it **is so rich** with so many choices. (Interviewee 11)*

*...there is **an awful lot going on** here at the moment [... ...] I mean there are those that can be a bit overwhelmed sometimes I would have thought. (Interviewee 21)*

*... I think you need to celebrate the fact that we have **a culturally rich life**, and that there are **many opportunities for people** and that they will be participating in those in their own sweet way... (Interviewee 5)*

*There is **lots of cultural participation going on in communities** but for some reason it is not seen as valid (Interviewee 41)*

*There is **culture happening everywhere**. From our farms and orchards to hospitals, theatres and our own front rooms". (Speaker at Public Event 1)*

Appendix 1.02 - Cultural participation as artefact

I think out with my art form, which is theatre, I enjoy galleries, exhibitions, heritage that sort of thing. (Interviewee 41)

What do engage with personally? Well I will say a little about what that means for me, is film, photography, bits of visual arts and a lot of music, but it is interesting because I wouldn't see myself as a participant in any of those things. (Interviewee 25)

... I am very much engaged with art, and I absolutely love design; I trained as a silversmith. I also write fiction in my spare time so I am very engaged

with book festivals, literary events, all those sort of things, and I love live music. (Interviewee 20)

...I would talk about fine art galleries, and films and music and possible even television. (Interviewee 7)

Appendix 1.03 – Questioning the logics of the Scottish Household Survey

Yes exactly, sure if you look at gigs, underground culture, sharing music through the internet that is predominantly ... I am making this up obviously, but I think it is quite a male thing, and again I am back to football again aren't I? So yes I think, the way you are talking about measurement, I am thinking what is it measuring? Is it of any use to anyone? (Interviewee 7)

I think it is quite limiting by...I am very surprised by this and I have heard it before but couldn't believe it... that they don't include radios and television as culture... (Interviewee 20)

...we are wealthy and we do have access to culture in our living rooms, through our TV [... ...] the perception that people are not going to opera or theatre of whatever, no it doesn't matter because actually it is alright compared to other places ... (Interviewee 14)

It is interesting that going to comedy isn't [included in the SHS] (Interviewee 12)

It's interesting how they define culture. Within a city you may have lots of people who are not accessing cultural buildings, events etc. but within their communities....if they play in a band in the pub then that is culture, there is a lot of community stuff that happens that is still culture. That question of how we measure it is something we are always working with (Interviewee 41)

[Talking about the likelihood that the people they worked with had been to commercial theatre]. They are still accessing theatre, let's not take anything away from that, let's not have any kind of snobbery here. (Interviewee 41)

[Talking about theatre and gaming] neither of these things should be superior over the other and I think that is where we get in to that whole thing about the arts being something separate and different but they are just things that people do. (Interviewee 38)

Certainly it is possible to be non-engaged in the culture that is listed in the SHS or the Taking Part survey in England [... ...] People do things in their

leisure time but just don't see those things as cultural in the way we are asking about it. (Interviewee 25)

Appendix 1.04 - The impossibility of non-participation

Interviewer: Do you think it is possible for people not to engage with culture?

Interviewee 12: No, probably not actually, I don't know....

Interviewer: OK, but could you perhaps imagine someone who is not culturally engaged?

Interviewee 12: No, I really can't, actually, because everyone listens to music don't they? Or they go to gigs, watch films

Interviewer: So the national indicator suggests 89% are engaged with culture, meaning that 11% don't

Interviewee 20: So what are they doing, you would have to wonder wouldn't you! [laughs]

Interviewer: So you don't think it is possible?

Interviewee 20: No, I don't think it is, because, it really depends, you know, you would have to live in a cave ... maybe prisoners? But then again they do have access to culture in prisons, they have televisions don't they? Surely that is culture? It is culture. We know it is. So I don't think it is possible, unless someone was living in a cave as a hermit

Interviewer: So is it possible to be a cultural non-participant?

Interviewee 6: No, because everyone is involved in some sort of culture, but what we are talking about here is a much more formal culture in terms of some established museums, plays, theatres etc. but I think that anybody is going to be involved in something whether it is listening to their CD's playing their video games or...there will be some connection with culture for everyone.

I don't think that the nine percent [referring to the 91% cultural engagement statistic¹⁸⁰] are people who are able to access culture and don't, I think they are probably people who can't for some reason as I can't imagine anyone who could access culture not doing something, at least once a year. I think that for me is beyond the realms of possibility" (Interviewee 13)

So if a non-attender is somebody who you have never reached in anyway, who has never darkened the door of a theatre ever, or a concert hall, or a cinema or whatever, if you actually think about it in that way then it is highly unlikely that there is anybody in the population who has never done

¹⁸⁰ There are two figures referenced in the interviews as the national indicator was updated from 89% to 91% engagement in 2013

any of those things, and in that case everybody is an attender (Interviewee 19)

Presumably there are people that are non-engaged with culture, in that they don't do cooking or gardening, or...but...but actually they probably still watch television. They will still have some interest in the wider culture. (Interviewee 25)

Appendix 1.05 - Knowledge of the national indicator

Ok, well I assume there is one, I don't actually know what it is but I am thinking it will be participation in numbers of.... (Interviewee 7)

No, I could probably have a stab at some ideas and things that I might have heard, but not as an actual policy. I mean I presume it is something along the lines of Scotland is a cultural engaged nation; you know, participate and celebrate cultural heritage or something [laughs] (Interviewee 8)

Not necessarily precisely, I mean key performance indicators is what we deal with at our level, but in broader terms of what [the indicator] is, I don't think I could repeat back to you exactly what that is (Interviewee 20)

Appendix 1.06 – Barriers

....and then all of the old conventional barriers of time and money and information [PRACTICAL BARRIER] will come (Interviewee 5)

...when people say I just don't, I dismiss the whole area of cultural activity, I am not prepared to engage, participate, even vaguely think about it [MENTAL BARRIER], and that is this sort of brick wall [BARRIER] that somehow you want to take down (Interviewee 14)

...have they had the opportunity for it to engender excitement in them, or speak to them, and if they haven't then that is something to address, and if they have then what is stopping them [BARRIER], it is more physical [PHYSICAL BARRIER], it is money [PRACTICAL BARRIER], it is I am scared of that building, it all seems for rich people [MENTAL BARRIERS], all those things you know all too well. (Interviewee 9)

*Those who wish to access culture there shouldn't be financial barriers [PRACTICAL BARRIER] there shouldn't be social barriers [PRACTICAL/PSYCHOLOGICAL BARRIERS], there shouldn't be **psychological barriers**, there shouldn't be a sense of elitism, there shouldn't be a cultural landscape within a city whereby culture is for the haves form a certain postcode and not for the have nots. (Interviewee 41)*

Appendix 1.07 - The resilience of distinctions

*The question we need to be asking is how do we move the young from digital engagement to **real engagement**? (Attendee at public event 1)*

*I think what we are trying to address is to look at people with the very small maps, who haven't had a chance to kind of like, haven't had that many opportunities to experience **interesting culture and creativity**... (Interviewee 22)*

*You can't just come in and say that we are a brass band and we are going to do popular show tunes and everybody in Scotland is going to see it because we are going to tour it round...**that quality needs to be there first** (Interviewee 25)*

I think if you were picking up a newspaper then you are participating in culture, well depends on what newspaper you are reading [laughs] (Interviewee 14)

Well no, not the singing kettle, no I have a quality threshold [laughs] (Interviewee 5)

Do you mean that maybe going to the opera is better than going to see the James Bond film [laughs] (Interviewee 12)

[After recognising the theatre, cinema, shopping as all being valuable in some way] ...wouldn't it be an unusual society if people were just inside online, or watching movies or online shopping [laughs] but maybe that is what is coming our way (Interviewee 38)

Appendix 1.08 - The centrality of the arts

*...we are not responding to policy, we are responding **to art**...(Interviewee 14)*

*...there is an altruism there that they get a general introduction to what **the arts** might be, I am not sure about culture, I would be more inclined to use the word, **the arts**. (Interviewee 21)*

*Does it include video games and television? Because if it includes culture in the widest, creative industries umbrella, then it is probably pretty high, but if it is actually talking about **the arts and culture as related to the arts** then it is probably a lot lower (Interviewee 38)*

*... are we talking purely about **the arts** here? (Interviewee 3)*

*I think there is a lot of emphasis at the moment on health and well-being and, em, how **the arts** can help various problems. (Interviewee 1)*

*...that is the fallacy of policy; the money sits in engagement and participation not simply in funding **the arts**" (Interviewee 21)*

*[talking about who non-participation was a problem for] predominantly it's the organisations problem, and **the arts** (Interviewee 18)*

*...the assumption with art is that it holds entertainment anyway, I think...but that is art, I am talking about **the arts** I have realised, which is a part of culture... (Interviewee 14)*

*It is true that when you start to be touched by **the arts** your life changes, you can engage with more complex ideas, you can be a bit more self-aware, there are all sorts of really good soft targets that come from people engaging with **the arts** and what is wonderful is that those arguments have been absolutely won. But let me say it is not without constant missioning, a constant reaffirmation that ... you can't ever be complacent that a government will think **the arts** is good for its population, so we are all very good advocates for **the arts**, but it is a little bit, well just about **the arts**, there are a lot of other things that are fairly transformative on this planet, not just **the arts** (Interviewee 21)*

*Young people should be accessing **the arts** for arts sake (Interviewee 41)*

Appendix 1.09 - The impacts of cultural participation

*I think that art is about enlightenment and so, therefore the, it is vitally important that everybody has access to that enlightenment [... ...] What we are offering is the light bulb moment, the moments of **enlightenment** [...] so the education bit is vitally important, which to me is culture, and then there is aspiration and that is where **enlightenment** comes in. (Interviewee 14)*

*...then there is the ambition or will to achieve, to change, and that is about **empowerment**, so that is where culture sits as well, to be able to **empower** people to realise it through whatever means. (Interviewee 14)*

*...engaging with dance, I personally feel, **gives them a voice** [empowerment], and for many people who don't feel that they are particularly academic, in different ways, or, dance can help in so many ways to build bridges for people who feel that they don't slot in in normal ways (Interviewee 2)*

.... It acts as a sort of societal glue em, in, in makes society function more efficiently and more productively and makes children better learners (Interviewee 19)

*As I understand it, a piece of work has been done that links health outcomes and participation in culture and all things being equal you are told that **people have better health outcomes**, regardless of class, location anything like that, if they are culturally engaged and intuitively I do believe that, and I believe **communities work better** when there is a cultural offer and people are culturally engaged. (Interviewee 25)*

*Our culture and our heritage root us in a place but don't fix us in a place – they help to **empower**, enrich and shape our communities (Hyslop, 2013)*

Appendix 1.10 - The arts and....

*We want a Scotland where everyone actively values and celebrates **arts and** creativity as the heartbeat for our lives (Creative Scotland, 2014c, p.13)*

***Arts and** creativity offer meaning to people's lives in many different ways. (Creative Scotland, 2014c, p.48)*

*[SHS question] I would now like to ask about your views on culture, heritage **and the arts***

Appendix 1.11 - Hard to reach

*[all our work] is aimed at excluded young people, or **hard to reach** young people... (Interviewee 4)*

*...we've been developing a project which is about how to reach **hard to reach** young people between 16 and 18. (Interviewee 19)*

*...and in Scotland it is that **hard to reach** communities that are too distant...(Interviewee 20)*

Appendix 1.12 – The right kind of experience

*After a cultural experience people usually feel better, as long as the experience is **well handled** (Interviewee38)*

*Somebody going that they would rather be at home listening to the radio because they think theatre is a bit shit, now that is hard because have they had the experience of **good theatre** (Interviewee 41)*

Appendix 1.13 - Personal taste

*I am not surprised, because that is what human beings are like, **we live in a skin**, and it is very difficult for us to think beyond that (Interviewee 21)*

*[Discussing Jazz, Folk and World Music] **I just don't identify with them in anyway**, I see people who are performing and engaged and interested in the subject and I just, **it finds no connection with me at all** and so I look upon it as an alien, and not even an alien that thinks I don't really understand it but it is kind of beautiful [laughs] I am more likely to think why are you bothering, just stop! (Interviewee 8)*

*...in my head I am thinking computers and gaming and internet and all the culture that is on there is completely alien to me, completely alien, I mean certainly the gaming culture, it has absolutely no interest to me [...] the thing is I could if I spent the hours on it that others do but I don't **because it doesn't interest me**. (Interviewee 38)*

*People would just say to me that it is because I don't know how to enjoy opera so it is about learning a language and learning about the history of the art form to open all that up to you, but I think it is important not to have to do all of that....**I mean if I don't like it now, I just don't like** listening to music in that sort of way (Interviewee 25)*

Interviewer: Is it ever ok for someone to say actually that is not for me

Interviewee 20: Absolutely

Interviewer: So why do we have such an issue, do we think that everything is for everyone, is that realistic to believe?

*Interviewee 20: I don't think it is a real aspiration because I don't like boxing and nobody is going to persuade me to go and see it, you know ... it is **personal taste** and **personal choice***

Appendix 1.14 - It's OK not to say it is not for me

I think I've always felt that there aren't that many sort of people out there that ... who, who don't use us but just don't know that it really is for them, if you see what I mean. So I think that is a very small group and it's a little bit superior for, for, you know, people to imagine that the only reason this isn't being used is because, you know, these people, that we know better than these people themselves (Interviewee 3)

With the non-attender I would be worried if they have never been given that opportunity, but if they have chosen, if they have done it and gone that it really wasn't for me, I kind of think that is OK (Interviewee 38)

...there are all sorts of personal tastes which are perfectly legitimate... (Interviewee 19)

...it is a bit of a stupid idea to think that everybody should be interested in art and culture ... it would be a strange world if everybody was actually... (Interviewee 12)

...some people's cultural participation might be going to the cinema and listening to music and they might not care or ever be interested in anything else and that is fine! (Interviewee 12)

...it is fine, its fine by me, I don't have a problem with that, I mean I am not encouraging people to come, at most I would be asking them to buy a ticket and to make up their own mind, that is all really (Interviewee 21)

Appendix 1.15 - Openness to participation

***I would probably give everything a go**, particularly if somebody else was paying [laughs] (Interviewee 7)*

*...but no, **I am pretty eclectic** really... (Interviewee 11)*

[directly after they have said they are quite happy not to be going to opera] *But I am lucky enough to be engaged in, or involved in or participate in a lot...**a range of culture**... (Interviewee 19)*

*I wouldn't want to go and see the ballet and that is my choice, but I'm not taking anything away from those art forms and **I would go if I had to**. (Interviewee 41)*

[After stating that they would not choose to go themselves] *If someone was going to give me a free ticket **I might go to** a classical concert (Interviewee 38)*

Appendix 1.16 - I can stretch myself

....books it is generally, really basically... I would see what I bought on Amazon and then see what they recommend for you based on what you have bought, and Eventbrite is very good, sending you through emails asking if you would like to go to this too [... ...] that is good because I learn about things that I absolutely wouldn't have known about. Facebook is a really good one for that as well. (Interviewee 26)

Interviewer: *So the presumption is that you have made an informed choice not to go, even the things that you have never been to before?*

Interviewee 41: *Yeah...*

They know and I know that if I wanted to and if I could afford it I could get myself a ticket and off I go (Interviewee 41)

Appendix 2.01 – Oral consent form



Queen Margaret University
EDINBURGH

My name is David Stevenson and I am a PhD research candidate from the School of Arts, Social Science and Management at Queen Margaret University in Edinburgh. I am currently undertaking a research project provisionally entitled: *Everyone's invited, but do they want to come?* This study is investigating the Scottish Government's policy to encourage greater participation in culture, and in particular why, despite many years of focus, cultural participation patterns remain broadly unchanged. This study has been granted ethical approval by Queen Margaret University.

I am currently looking for volunteers to participate in the project. Anyone volunteering to participate should be over 16 years of age and fit into one of two broad categories:

1. Be involved in the creation of cultural policy at a strategic level, or work within an organisation that does.
2. Be involved in the creation or delivery of activity intended to increase cultural participation within a cultural organisation that receives some form of public money.

If you agree to participate in the study, you will be asked to take part in a recorded interview, either one-to-one with the interviewer or alongside others that you know. The whole procedure should take approximately one hour. You will be free to withdraw from the study at any stage and you would not have to give a reason, you do not have to answer any questions you do not want to. You are also free to request that the interview is not recorded.

All data will be anonymised as much as possible, but you may be identifiable from tape recordings of your voice that will only be heard by the researcher and their supervisors. While your name and organisation will be listed as a participant in the research, any direct quotations will not be attributable to you. If you wish, your name will be replaced with a pseudonym in any written documentation, and any aspects of your interview that reveal your identity can be redacted. The results of this study may be published in a journal, monograph or presented at a conference. The recordings and any transcripts that are made will be kept secure in password-protected files and only seen by the researcher and their supervisors.

If you would like to contact an independent person, who knows about this project but is not involved in it, you are welcome to contact Dr Mark Gillham. His contact details are given overleaf. If you have read and understood this information sheet, any questions you had have been answered, and you would

like to be a participant in the study, then I will take your participation in the interview as consent to contribute to this study.

Thank you for your interest in this research

David Stevenson MA, AFHEA

Contact details of the researcher

Name of researcher: David Stevenson

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Email / Telephone: dstevenson@qmu.ac.uk / 0131 474 0000

Contact details of the independent adviser

Name of adviser: Dr Mark Gillham

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